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THE YOUNGER AMERICAN
POETS



THE
YOUNGER AMERICAN
POETS

BY
JESSIE B. RITTENHOUSE

ILLUSTRATED WITH PORTRAITS

BOSTON
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To

LOUISE CHANDLER MOULTON

WHO HAS ENRICHED AMERICAN LITERATURE WITH HER SONG,
AND MY LIFE WITH HER FRIENDSHIP,
THESE STUDIES OF THE YOUNGER POETS
ARE INSCRIBED
WITH THE WARM AFFECTION OF
JESSIE B. RITTENHOUSE

FOREWORD

TO attempt, in one volume, to cover the entire field of present-day poetry in America, will be recognized the more readily as impossible when one reflects that in Mr. Stedman's *American Anthology* over five hundred poets are represented, of whom the greater number are still living and singing.

One may scarcely hope, then, in the space of one volume, to include more than a representative group, even when confining his study to the work of the younger poets, for within this class would fall the larger contingent named above. It has therefore been necessary to follow a general, though not arbitrary, standard of chronology, of which the most feasible seemed that adopted by Mr. Archer in his admirable study of the English "*Poets of the Younger Generation*,"—the including only of such as have been born within the last half-century, and whose place is still in the making. The few remaining poets whose art has long since defined itself, such as Mr. Aldrich, Mr.

Foreword

Stedman, and Mrs. Moulton, need no further interpretation; nor does the long-acknowledged work of Mr. Richard Watson Gilder, nor that of James Whitcomb Riley, whose final criticism has been pronounced in every heart and at every hearth.

The work of Mr. Edwin Markham, the poet of democracy, whose fraternal songs embody many of the latter-day ideals, and that of John B. Tabb, the lapidary of modern verse, who cuts with infinite care his delicate cameos of thought, were also beyond the chronological scheme of the volume. Nor of those who fell within its scope could a selection be made that would not seem to some invidious, since it must chance among so great a number that many would be omitted who should, with equal right, have been included; it returns, therefore, to the earlier statement, that one must confine himself to a representative group, with whose work he chance to be most familiar, and upon which he has, therefore, the truer claim to speak.

It seemed, also, that the volume would have more value if it gave to a smaller number such a study as would differentiate and define their work, rather than to a larger group the passing comment of a few paragraphs. It was a great

regret, however, that circumstances incident to the copyrights prevented me from including the admirable work of William Vaughn Moody, which reveals by its breadth, penetration, and purpose, the thinker and not the dreamer. Indeed, Mr. Moody's work, in its vitality of touch, fine imagination, and spiritual idealism, proves not only the creative poet but one to whom the nobler offices of Art have been entrusted, and the critic given to inquiring why the former times were better than these may well keep his eye upon the work of Mr. Moody.

It was also a regret that those inexorable arbiters, space and time, deprived me of the privilege of including the strongly individual work of Helen Gray Cone; the artistic, thoughtful verse of Anna Hempstead Branch; the sincere and sympathetic song of Virginia Woodward Cloud; the spiritual verse of Lilian Whiting, with its interpretation of the higher imports; the heartening, characteristic notes of Theodosia Garrison; and the recently issued poems of Josephine Dodge Daskam, which prove beyond peradventure that the Muses, too, were at her christening,—indeed, the “Songs of Iseult Deserted,” which form a group in her volume, are lyrics worthy of any hand.

Foreword

Had it been possible in the space at command, I should also have had pleasure in considering the work of Frank Dempster Sherman, who is not only an accomplished lyrist, but who has divined the heart of the child and set it to music; the cheer-giving songs of Frank L. Stanton, fledged with the Southland sunshine and melody; and the verse-stories of Holman F. Day, bringing from the pines of Maine their pungent aroma of humor and pathos. Mr. Day covers an individual field, representing such phases of New England life as have been little celebrated hitherto, even by writers of fiction. He is familiar with every corner of Maine from the mountains to the sea, and writes of humanity in the concrete, sketching his types equally from the lumber camp or from the sailors and fishermen of the shore. In his latest volume they are drawn from the "Kin o' Ktaadn," and hold their way throughout its pages with a reality provoking both laughter and tears; indeed, one must seek far to find a keener humor, or one more infectious, than that of Mr. Day, or a more sympathetic penetration into the pathos of life. The heart is the book of his reading, and, in turn, the heart is the book of his writing.

There is no attempt in these studies of the

younger poets to group them into schools, to define them in relation to one another, or to hazard prophecies concerning them. Each is considered in his present accomplishment, whether the work be fresh from the pen, or come bringing with it the endorsement of time, since the song of yesterday may carry farther than that already borne on the wings of the years, and has equal claim to consideration in a volume devoted to the work of the younger singers; for only by such consideration shall we learn what is being done in our own day.

J. B. R.



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CONTENTS

	PAGE
FOREWORD	vii
I. RICHARD HOVEY	I
II. LIZETTE WOODWORTH REESE	27
III. BLISS CARMAN	46
IV. LOUISE IMOGEN GUINEY	75
V. GEORGE E. SANTAYANA	94
VI. JOSEPHINE PRESTON PEABODY	110
VII. CHARLES G. D. ROBERTS	132
VIII. EDITH M. THOMAS	151
IX. MADISON CAWEIN	177
X. GEORGE E. WOODBERRY	196
XI. FREDERIC LAWRENCE KNOWLES	212
XII. ALICE BROWN	235
XIII. RICHARD BURTON	248
XIV. CLINTON SCOLLARD	269
XV. MARY MCNEIL FENOLLOSA	290
XVI. RIDGELY TORRENCE	299
XVII. GERTRUDE HALL	315
XVIII. ARTHUR UPSON	325
BIOGRAPHICAL INDEX	347

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

RICHARD HOVEY	<i>Frontispiece</i>
LIZETTE WOODWORTH REESE	<i>Facing page</i> 28
BLISS CARMAN	" " 48
LOUISE IMOGEN GUINEY	" " 76
JOSEPHINE PRESTON PEABODY	" " 112
CHARLES G. D. ROBERTS	" " 134
MADISON CAWEIN	" " 178
GEORGE E. WOODBERRY	" " 198
FREDERIC LAWRENCE KNOWLES	" " 214
Alice Brown	" " 236
RICHARD BURTON	" " 250
CLINTON SCOLLARD	" " 270
MARY McNEIL FENOLLOSA	" " 292
RIDGELY TORRENCE	" " 300

The Younger American Poets

I

RICHARD HOVEY

RICHARD HOVEY was a poet of convictions rather than of fancies, in which regard he overtopped many of his contemporaries who were content to be "enamored architects of airy rhyme." Hovey was himself a skilful architect of rhyme, an imaginative weaver of fancy; but these were not ends, he does not stand primarily for them. He stands for comradeship; for taking vows of one's own soul; for alliance with the shaping spirit of things; for a sane, wholesome, lusty manhood; a hearty, confident surrender to life.

He is the poet of positivism, virile, objective, and personal to a Whitmanesque degree, and answers to many of the qualifications laid down by Whitman for the testing of an American poet. His performance is eminently

of the sort to "face the open fields and the seaside;" it does "absorb into one;" it "animates to life," and it is of the people. It answers also to the query, "Have you vivified yourself from the maternity of these States?" for Hovey was an American of the Americans, and his patriotic poems are instinct with national pride, though one may dissent from certain of his opinions upon war.

Hovey, to the degree of his development when his hand was stayed, was a finely balanced man and artist. The purely romantic motives which form the entire basis, for example, of Stephen Phillips' work, and thus render him a poet of the cultured classes and not of the people, were foreign to the spirit of Hovey. He, too, was recasting in dramatic form some of beauty's imperishable traditions; but this was only one phase of his art, it did not cause him to approach his own time with less of sympathy; and while he had not yet come deeply into the prophet gifts of song, their potency was upon him, and in the Odes, which contain some of his strongest writing, his passion for brotherhood, for development through comradeship, finds splendid expression. In the best known of his odes, "*Spring*," occurs this stirring symbol:

For surely in the blind deep-buried roots
Of all men's souls to-day
A secret quiver shoots.

• • • • •
The darkness in us is aware
Of something potent burning through the earth,
Of something vital in the procreant air.

It is in this ode, with the exception of his visioning of "Night" in *Last Songs from Vagabondia*, that the influence of Whitman upon Hovey comes out most prominently; that is, the influence of manner. The really vital influence is one much less easily demonstrated, but no less apparent to a student of both poets. It is not of the sort, however, to detract from the originality of Hovey, but rather an intensifying of his characteristics, a focalizing of his powers, and is in accordance with Whitman's declaration that

"He most honors my style
Who learns under it to destroy the teacher."

Hovey's own nature was so individual that he rarely failed to destroy the teacher, or he was perhaps unconscious of having one; but in the opening lines of the ode in question the Whitman note is unmistakable:

I said in my heart, "I am sick of four walls and a ceiling.
I have need of the sky.

The Younger American Poets

I have business with the grass.
I will up and get me away where the hawk is wheeling,
Lone and high,
And the slow clouds go by.

Spring, like a huntsman's boy,
Hallos along the hillsides and unhoods
The falcon in my will.
The dogwood calls me, and the sudden thrill
That breaks in apple blooms down country roads
Plucks me by the sleeve and nudges me away.
The sap is in the boles to-day,
And in my veins a pulse that yearns and goads."

Could volumes of conventional nature poetry set one a-tingle like this? The crowning excellence of Hovey's nature poems is that they are never reports, they do not describe with far-sought imagery, but are as personal as a poem of love or other emotion. Such passionate surrender, such intimate delight as finds expression, for example, in "The Faun," could scarcely be more communicative and direct. It becomes at once our own mood, an interchange which is the test of art:

. . . And I plunge in the wood, and the swift soul cleaves
Through the swirl and the flow of the leaves,
As a swimmer stands with his white limbs bare to the sun
For the space that a breath is held, and drops in the sea ;
And the undulant woodland folds round me, intimate, fluctuant, free,

Like the clasp and the cling of waters, and the reach and
the effort is done ;—
There is only the glory of living, exultant to be.

In such words as these one loses thought of the merely picturesque, their infection takes hold upon him, particularly in that line befitting the forest spirit as a garment, in which

The undulant woodland folds round me, intimate, fluctuant,
free, —

a line wherein the idea, feeling, movement, and diction are wholly at one. It is impossible for Richard Hovey to be aloof and analytical in any phase of his work, and when he writes of nature it is as the comrade to whom she is a mystic personality. A stanza of "The Faun" illustrates this; still in the wood, he asks :

Oh, what is it breathes in the air?

Oh, what is it touches my cheek?

There's a sense of a presence that lurks in the branches.

But where?

Is it far, is it far to seek?

The first two collections of the *Vagabondia* books contain Hovey's most spontaneous nature verse ; they have also some of the lyrics by which he will be known when such a rollicking stave as "Barney McGee," at which one laughs

as a boyish exuberance, is forgotten. The quips of rhyme and fancy that enliven the pages of the earlier volumes give place, in the *Last Songs*, to a note of seriousness and artistic purpose which sets the collection to an entirely different key; not that the work is uniformly superior to that of the former songs, but it is more earnest in tone; dawn is giving place to noon.

From the second collection may be cited one of the lyric inspirations that sometimes came to Hovey, all warmth and color, as if fashioned complete in a thought. It is called "A Sea Gypsy," and the first of its quatrains, though perhaps not more than the others, has a haunting charm:

I am fevered with the sunset,
I am fretful with the bay,
For the wander-thirst is on me
And my soul is in Cathay.

There's a schooner in the offing,
With her topsails shot with fire,
And my heart has gone aboard her
For the Islands of Desire.

I must forth again to-morrow!
With the sunset I must be
Hull down on the trail of rapture
In the wonder of the sea.

Aside from the dramas, and the noble elegy, "Seaward," Hovey's most representative work is found in his collection, *Along the Trail*, which opens with a group of battle-hymns inspired by the Spanish-American war. With the exception of "Unmanifest Destiny," and occasional trumpet notes from the poem called "Bugles," these battle-songs are more or less perfunctory, nor are they ethically the utterance of a prophet. There is the old assumption that because war has ever been, it ever will be; that because the sword has been the instrument of progress in past world-crises, it is the divinely chosen arbiter. There is nothing of that development of man that shall find a higher way, no visioning of a world-standard to which nations shall conform; it is rather the celebration of brawn, as in the sonnet "America." The jubilant note of his call of the "Bugles," however, thrills with passionate pride in his country as the deliverer of the weak, for the ultimate idea in Hovey's mind was his country's altruism; but, as a whole, the battle-songs lack the larger vision and are unequal in workmanship, falling constantly into the commonplace from some flight of lyric beauty. The best of them, and a worthy best, both in conception and in its dignified

simplicity, is "Unmanifest Destiny," which follows:

To what new fates, my country, far
And unforeseen of foe or friend,
Beneath what unexpected star,
Compelled to what unchosen end,

Across the sea that knows no beach
The Admiral of Nations guides
Thy blind obedient keels to reach
The harbor where thy future rides !

The guns that spoke at Lexington
Knew not that God was planning then
The trumpet word of Jefferson
To bugle forth the rights of men.

To them that wept and cursed Bull Run,
What was it but despair and shame?
Who saw behind the cloud the sun?
Who knew that God was in the flame?

Had not defeat upon defeat,
Disaster on disaster come,
The slave's emancipated feet
Had never marched behind the drum.

There is a Hand that bends our deeds
To mightier issues than we planned,
Each son that triumphs, each that bleeds,
My country, serves Its dark command.

I do not know beneath what sky
Nor on what seas shall be thy fate ;
I only know it shall be high,
I only know it shall be great.

Hovey's themes are widely diverse, but they are always of the essential purports. He seems not only integral with nature, but integral with man in his ardor of sympathy for his fellows, and the swift understanding of all that makes for achievement or defeat. He had the splendid nonchalance that met everything with confident ease, and made his relation to life like that of an athlete trained to prevail. Not to be servile, not to be negative, not to be vague,—these are some of the notes of his stirring song. Even in love there is a characteristic dash and *verve*, a celebration of comradeship as the keynote of the relation, that makes it possible for him to write this sonnet, so refreshing and wholesome, and so far removed from the mawkish or effeminate:

When I am standing on a mountain crest,
Or hold the tiller in the dashing spray,
My love of you leaps foaming in my breast,
Shouts with the winds and sweeps to their foray ;
My heart bounds with the horses of the sea,
And plunges in the wild ride of the night,
Flaunts in the teeth of tempest the large glee
That rides out Fate and welcomes gods to fight.
Ho, love, I laugh aloud for love of you,
Glad that our love is fellow to rough weather, —
No fretful orchid hothoused from the dew,
But hale and hardy as the highland heather,

Rejoicing in the wind that stings and thrills,
Comrade of ocean, playmate of the hills.

And that other sonnet, "Faith and Fate," with its Valkyr spirit, and its words like ringing hoofbeats:

To horse, my dear, and out into the night !
Stirrup and saddle and away, away !
Into the darkness, into the affright,
Into the unknown on our trackless way !

And closing with one of his finest lines —

East, to the dawn, or west or south or north !
Loose rein upon the neck of Fate — and forth !

What valor in that line — "Loose rein upon the neck of Fate — and forth !" This is the typical mood, but I cannot refrain, before considering the last phase of his work, the dramas, from quoting another sonnet in another mood, because of its beauty and its revelation of the spiritual side of his nature :

My love for thee doth take me unaware,
When most with lesser things my brain is wrought,
As in some nimble interchange of thought
The silence enters, and the talkers stare.
Suddenly I am still and thou art there,
A viewless visitant and unbesought,
And all my thinking trembles into nought,
And all my being opens like a prayer.

Thou art the lifted Chalice in my soul,
And I a dim church at the thought of thee ;
Brief be the moment, but the mass is said,
The benediction like an aureole
Is on my spirit, and shuddering through me
A rapture like the rapture of the dead.

"The Quest of Merlin," Hovey's first incursion into drama, and indeed one of his earliest works, having been issued in 1891, is most illustrative of his defects and least of his distinctions. It is unnecessary to the subsequent dramas, though serving as an introduction to them, and has in itself very little constructive congruity. In the songs of the fairies, the dryads, the maenads, there is often a delicate airy beauty ; but the metrical lapses throughout the drama are so frequent as to detract from one's pleasure in the verse. This criticism is much less apposite to the subsequent works of the cycle.

Hovey's Arthurian dramas must be judged by the manner rather than motif, by the situations through which he develops the well-known story, and the dramatic beauty and passion of the dialogue, since the theme is his only as he makes it his by the art of his adaptation. He has given us the Arthur of Malory, and not of Tennyson, the Arthur of a certain early

intrigue with Morgance, the Queen of Orkney, outlived in all save its effect, that of bitterness and envy cherished by her against the young Queen Guinevere, and made use of as one of the motives of the drama.

While Tennyson's Arthur, until the final great scene with Guinevere in the convent, and Bedivere by the lake, has a lay-figure personality, placidly correct, but unconvincing,—in these scenes, and in the general ideal of the Round Table, as developed by Tennyson, there is such profound spiritual beauty that Arthur has come to dwell in a nebulous upper air, as of the gods. It is a shock, then, to see him brought down to earth, as he is in Hovey's dramas. However, the lapses are but referred to as incidental to the plot, not occurring during its action, and Arthur becomes to us a human, magnanimous personality, commanding sympathy, if he does not dominate the imagination as does Tennyson's hero. The handicap under which any poet labors who makes use of these legends, even though vitalizing them with a new touch, and approaching them from a new standpoint, is that the Tennyson touch, the Tennyson standpoint, has so impressed itself upon the memory that comparison is inevitable.

The fateful passion of Lancelot and Guinevere is enveloped by Tennyson in a spiritual atmosphere; but in the dramas of Hovey, while delicately approached, it lacks that elevation by which alone it lives as a soul-tragedy, and not as an intrigue. There is, indeed, a strife for loyalty on the part of Lancelot, when he returns from a chivalrous quest and learns that the King's bride is his unknown Lady of the Hills; but it is soon overborne by Galahault's assurance that Arthur is to Guinevere —

A mere indifferent, covenanted thing,

And that she

Is as virgin of the thought of love
As winter is of flowers.

Bere this declaration, Lancelot, in conflict with himself, had exclaimed:

Oh, Galahault, for love of my good name,
Unluck out your sword and kill me, for I see
Whate'er I do it will be violence —
No soul or body, others or myself!

But to Galahault's subtle arguments he opposes an ever-weakening will, and seeing the Queen walking in the garden, exquisite in beauty,

As if a rose grew on a lily's stem,
So blending passionate life and stately mien,—

he is persuaded to seek her, and, ere the close of the interview, half confessions have orb'd to full acknowledgment by each. The scene is artistically handled, especially in the ingenuous simplicity of Guinevere.

Hovey occasionally makes the mistake of robbing some vital utterance of its dramatic value by interlarding it with ornament. True emotion is not literary, and Guinevere, meeting Lancelot alone at the lodge of Galahault, for the first time after their mutual confession, having come hither disguised and by a perilous course, would scarcely have chosen these decorative words :

Oh, do not jar with speech
This perfect chord of silence ! — Nay, there needs
Thy throat's deep music. Let thy lips drop words
Like pearls between thy kisses ;

and Lancelot, of the overmastering passion, would scarcely have babbled this reply :

Thy speech breaks
Against the interruption of my lips
Like the low laughter of a summer brook
Over perpetual pebbles.

it when the crisis of the play is reached, when the court is rife with rumors of the Queen's disloyalty, and Lancelot and Guinevere, under imminent shadow of exposure, meet by chance in the throne room, — there is drawn a real, moving picture, one whose art lies in revealing the swift transition from impulse to impulse through which one passes when taking great decisions. First, the high light is thrown upon the stronger side of Guinevere, in such meditative passages as these, tinged with melancholy beauty :

have had a radiant dream ; we have beheld
the trellises and temples of the South,
I wandered in the vineyards of the Sun : —
it is morning now ; the vision fades away
and we must face the barren norland hills.

Lancelot. And must this be ?

Guinevere. Nay, Lancelot, it is.
How shall we stand alone against the world ?

Lancelot. More lonely in it than against !
What's the world to us ?

Guinevere. The place in which we live.
cannot slip it from us like a garment,
it is like the air — if we should flee
the remotest steppes of Tartary,
Asia, or the sources of the Nile, —
till is there, nor can it be eluded
in the airless emptiness of death.

And fortressed with resolve, she speaks of war,

of rending the kingdom, of violating friendships, of desecrating the family bond, to all of which Lancelot opposes his own desires:

And I —

I, too, defend it when it *is* a family,
 As I would kneel before the sacred Host
 When through the still aisles sounds the sacring bell ;
 But if a jester strutted through the forms
 And turned the holy Mass into a mock,
 Would I still kneel, or would I rise in anger
 And make an end of that foul mimicry?

This but adds strength to Guinevere's argument,

Believest thou, then, the power of the Church ?
 The Church would give our love an ugly name.

Lancelot. Faith, I believe, and I do not believe.
 The shocks of life oft startle us to thought,
 Rouse us from acquiescence and reveal
 That what we took for credence was but custom.

Guinevere. You are Arthur's friend, your love —
 Stands this within the honor of your friendship ?

Lancelot. Mother of God — have you no pity ?

Guinevere. I could be pitiful, and yet do right.
 Alas, how heavy — your tears move me more
 Than all — (what am I saying ? Dare I trust
 So faint a heart ? I must make turning back
 Impossible) ;

I would

and with a final resolve she adds :

But know the worst ! I jested —
 — God ! — I do not love you. Go ! 'T was all
 Fockery — wanton cruelty — what you will — lechery ! —

*(Lancelot looks at her dumbly, then slowly turns to go.
 Is he draws aside the curtain of the doorway—)*

Guinevere. Lancelot !

Lancelot. What does the Queen desire ?

Guinevere. Oh, no, I am not the Queen — I am
 our wife !

'ake me away with you ! Let me not lie
 'o you, of all — my whole life is a lie,
 'o one, at least, let it be truth. I — I —
 'Lancelot, do you not understand ?
 love you — Oh, I cannot let you go !

This swift change of front, this weakening,
 his inconsistency, is yet so human, so subtly
 true to life, under such a phase of it, that the
 ntire scene vibrates with emotion which gathers
 force in the declaration of Guinevere :

ove, I will fly with thee where'er thou wilt !

nd reaches its climax in the sudden strength
 with which Lancelot meets the Queen's weak-
 less. During her pleading that he should
 leave her, his selfish wish had been uppermost;
 ut her weakness recalls him to himself and
 vokes his latent loyalty to the King :

peak not of flight ; I have played him
 'alse — the King, my friend.

I ne'er can wipe that smirch away.
At least I will not add a second shame
And blazon out the insult to the world.

And Guinevere, casting about for her own justification, replies :

What I have given thee was ne'er another's.
How has another, then, been wronged ?

To which Lancelot :

What's done

Is done, nor right nor wrong, as help me, Heaven,
Would I undo it if I could. But more
I will not do. I will not be the Brutus
To stab with mine own hand my dearest friend.
It must suffice me that you love me, sweet,
And sometime, somewhere, somehow must be mine.
I know not — it may be in some dim land
Beyond the shadows, where the King himself,
Still calling me his friend, shall place your hand
In my hand, saying, "She was always thine."

No surplusage, no interposition of the merely literary, cumbers this scene, which immediately precedes the final one, in which Lancelot and the Queen are publicly accused before the King, sitting with Guinevere beside him on the throne.

The opportunity for a great dramatic effect is obvious; but through the magnanimity of Arthur, in waiving the impeachment, and exon-

rating from suspicion the Queen and Lancelot, the effect is not of the clash and din order, in fact, it is anti-climax in action, the real climax being a spiritual one whose subtlety would be lost on the average audience.

Lancelot (half aside, partly to Guinevere and partly to himself):

 He less kingly, Arthur,
 Or you will split my heart — not with remorse —
 No, not remorse, only eternal pain !
 Why, so the damned are !

Guinevere (half apart):

 To the souls in hell
is at least permitted to cry out.

Whatever one may think of the ethical side of the play as wrought out by Hovey, there is no question of its human element. As a whole, "The Marriage of Guenevere" leaves upon one a more concrete and vital impression than do the other dramas of the cycle, though it has less of action and intricacy of plot than the succeeding one, "The Birth of Galahad," and would probably, for stage purposes, be less effective.

The action of the latter play takes place chiefly with Arthur's army occupied in the siege of Rome, and unfolds an ingenious plot, turn-

ing upon the capture of Dagonet, the Queen's jester, who has been sent with a letter to Lancelot, informing him of the birth of his son, and announcing that Guinevere, having left the child with her friend, the Princess Ylen, had set out to join the army. The Romans at once conceive the plan of holding Dagonet; capturing the Queen for the palace of Caesar; and giving to Lancelot the alternative of forsaking Arthur, placing himself at the head of the army and becoming tributary king of Britain, with Guinevere as his queen; or of being publicly dishonored by the conveyance to Arthur of the incriminating letter. All of which was artfully planned, and might have been executed as artfully, had not Dagonet, the jester, in an act of jugglery, stolen the Emperor's cloak and escaped, and, in the guise of a scrivener, attached himself to the service of a young poet of Caesar's household.

Guinevere is captured by the Romans, and after many unsuccessful machinations on Caesar's part to subdue her to his will, and on the part of his advisers to win Lancelot to their ends, the letter, which may, according to the law of Britain, bring death to the Queen and banishment to Lancelot, is given to Dagonet to copy for Caesar, and is burned by the jester with the taper given

im to heat the waxen tablet. Then comes n apace the sacking of Rome by Arthur; the king of the city; the rescue of Guinevere y Lancelot; the slaying of Caesar and the owning of Arthur as Emperor of Rome ith Guinevere as Empress. The scene closes ith the entrance of a messenger with letters om Merlin, to Arthur and Guinevere, scan- ing which the Queen says apart to Lance- t:

All's well with him.

hus ends the drama, again with no suspicion n the part of Arthur that his faith has been trayed, and with no remorse on the part of uinevere at having betrayed it, only increas- g joy in the love of Lancelot. It is Lancelot mself who has the conflict, and in his charac- r lies the strength of the drama.

It is evident that Hovey intended to create flesh-and-blood Arthur, to eliminate the sanc- monious and retain the ideal; but the task oved too difficult, and after opening the ader's eyes to the human weaknesses of the ing, thereby inflicting a shock, he returns to e other extreme, lifts him again into upper r, and leaves him abstract and unconvincing. ancelot, on the contrary, if too palpably human

at the start, grows into a more spiritual ideal, and when for the first time he meets Guinevere transfigured with maternal joy, he greets her with these exquisite words :

How great a mystery you seem to me
I cannot tell. You seem to have become
One with the tides and night and the unknown.
My child . . . your child . . . whence come? By
What strange forge
Wrought of ourselves and dreams and the great deep
Into a life? I feel as if I stood
Where God had passed by, leaving all the place
Aflame with him.

And again he says,

The strangeness is
That I, who have not borne him, am aware,
I, too, of intimacy with his soul.

The dramas abound in quotable passages, nor are they lacking in those that make the judicious grieve. The work is unequal; but as a whole it lives in the imagination, and remains in the memory, especially "The Marriage of Guenevere," in that twilight of the mind where dwell all mystic shapes of hapless lovers.

The last of the dramatic cycle, "The Masque of Taliesin," is regarded by most of Mr. Hovey's critics as the high-water mark of his verse, and it has certainly some of the purest song of his

pen, and profoundest in thought and conception; but it has also passages of unresolved metaphysics, whose place, unless the poet had the patience to shape them to a finer issue, should be in a Greek philosophy.

The Masque turns upon the quest of the Graal by Percival, and is in three scenes, or movements, set in the forest of Broceliande, Helicon, and the Chapel of the Graal. It introduces the Muses, Merlin, Apollo, Nimue, King Evelac, guardian of the Graal, and lesser mortals and deities, but chief in interest, Taliesin, a bard, through whom are spoken the finest passages of the play. As the work is cast in the form of a Masque, to obviate the need of adhering to a strict dramatic structure, one may dispense with a summary of its slight plot, and look, instead, at the verse.

The passages spoken by Apollo to Taliesin, in other words, Inspiration defining itself to the poet, are full of glowing thought :

Greaten thyself to the end, I am he for whose breath thou
art greatened ;

Perfect thy speech to a god's, I am he for whom speech is
made perfect ;

And my voice in the hush of thy heart is the voice of the
tides of the worlds.

Thou shalt know it is I when I speak, as the foot knows the
rock that it treads on,

As the sea knows the moon, as the sap knows the place of
the sun in the heavens,
As the cloud knows the cloud it must meet and embrace
with caresses of lightning.
When thou hearest my voice, thou art one with the hurl of
the stars through the void,
One with the shout of the sea and the stampede of droves
of the wind,
One with the coursers of Time and the grip of God's hand
on their harness ;
And the powers of the night and the grave shall avail not to
stand in thy path.

Genius and its invincible assurance could scarcely be defined better than in this passage.

The Masque contains a litany spoken by King Evelac, and responded to by the choristers at the Chapel of Graal, which is one of its achievements, in point of beauty, though too long to quote, and lyrics of great delicacy are scattered throughout the work; but in the more spiritual passages, spoken chiefly by Taliesin, one gets the finer quality of the verse, as in this noble query addressed to Uriel, the angel who holds the flaming sword before the Graal:

Thou who beholdest God continually,
Doth not his light shine even on the blind
Who feel the flood they lack the sense to see ?
The lark that seeks him in the summer sky
Finds there the great blue mirror of his soul ;

Winged with the dumb need of he knows not what,
He finds the mute speech of he knows not whom.
Is not the wide air, after the cocoon,
As much God as the moth-soul can receive?
Doth not God give the child within the womb
Some guess to set him groping for the world,
Some blurred reflection answering his desire?
We, shut in this blue womb of doming sky,
Guess and grope dimly for the vast of God,
And, eyeless, through some vague, less perfect sense,
Strive for a sign of what it is to see.

Had one space to follow Mr. Hovey's philosophy in the more metaphysical passages, though fashioned less artistically, the individuality of his thought in its subtler and more speculative phases would be revealed, but to trace it adequately one must needs have the volume before him, rather than such extracts as may be given in a brief study. I must therefore, in taking leave of his work, content myself with citing the exultant lines with which the volume closes, the splendid death-song lifting one on the wave of its ecstatic feeling:

Unaware as the air of the light that fills full all its girth,
Yet crowds not an atom of air from its place to make way ;
Growing from splendor to splendor, from birth to birth,
As day to the rose of dawn from the earlier gray ;
As day from the sunrise gold to the luminous mirth
Of morning, and brighter and brighter, till noon shall be ;

Intense as the cling of the sun to the lips of the earth,
And cool as the call of a wind on the still of the sea,

Joy, joy, joy in the height and the deep ;
Joy like the joy of a leaf that unfolds to the sun ;
Joy like the joy of a child in the borders of sleep ;
Joy like the joy of a multitude thrilled into one.

.

Stir in the dark of the stars unborn that desire
Only the thrill of a wild, dumb force set free,
Yearn of the burning heart of the world on fire
For life and birth and battle and wind and sea,
Groping of life after love till the spirit aspire,
Into Divinity ever transmuting the clod,
Higher and higher and higher and higher and higher
Out of the Nothingness world without end into God.

Man from the blindness attaining the succor of sight,
God from his glory descends to the shape we can see ;
Life, like a moon, is a radiant pearl in the night
Thrilled with his beauty to beacon o'er forest and sea ;
Life, like a sacrifice laid on the altar, delight
Kindles as flame from the air to be fire at its core !
Joy, joy, joy in the deep and the height !
Joy in the holiest, joy evermore, evermore !

II

LIZETTE WOODWORTH REESE

MISS LIZETTE WOODWORTH REESE is an Elizabethan, not by affectation, but by temperament. Sidney and Lovelace and Herrick and Marlowe are her contemporaries, though she moves among them as a gray-robed figure among gay cavaliers and knights, so restrained is her mood, so delicate in its withholding.

Her first collection is aptly named, *A Handful of Lavender*, for the fragrance of the elder time pervades it impalpably, as the scent of lavender makes sweet the linen of some treasured chest. How Miss Reese has been able, in the hurly-burly of American life, to find some indesecrate corner, some daffodiled garden-close, holding always the quiet and the glint of sunshine out of which these songs have come, is an enigma worth a poet's solving. She is a Southern woman, which may furnish some clew to the repose of her work. There is time down there to ripen, to let life have its own way of enrichment with

one. She has been content to publish three books of verse — although the first is now incorporated with the second — in the interval in which our Northern poets would have produced a half-dozen; nor does she much concern herself, when once the captive melodies are freed, as to their flight. She knows there are magnetic breezes in the common air, charméd winds that blow unerringly, and in whose upper currents song's wings are guided, as the carrier-doves', to their appointed goal.

There is a delicate harmony between Miss Reese's poems and their number, a nicety of adjustment between quality and quantity, that bespeaks the artist. She has the critic's gift of appraising her own work before it leaves her hand, and thus forestalls much of the criticism that might otherwise attend it. The faculty of self-analysis would be a safety-valve to the high-pressure speed at which most literature of to-day is produced — but, alas, the few that employ it! "Open the throttle and let it drive!" is the popular injunction to the genius within, and wherever it drives, one is expected to follow. How refreshing it is, then, to come upon work with calm upon it! — work that came out of time, culture, and artist-love, and trusts its appreciation to the same standards.



Miss Reese's verse shows constant affinity with Herrick, though it is rarely so blithe. It has the singing mood, but not the buoyant one, being tempered by something delicate and remote. The unheard melodies within it are the sweetest; it pipes to the spirit "ditties of no tone." Even its least rare fancies convey more than they say, and it must be confessed that much so-called poetry says more than it conveys. Whitman's mystical words: "All music is what awakes from you when you are reminded by the instruments," applies equally well to poetry, to poetry of suggestion, such as Miss Reese's. Yesterday's parted grace has been transmuted to poetry within us all, but it is a voiceless possession, speaking to us in the soul. Miss Reese's poems, by a line or two, perhaps, put one in swift possession of that vanishing beauty within himself. It floods back, perchance in tears, but it is ours again. Take almost a random citation, for this quality is rarely absent from her poems, whether they summon Joy or Pain,—her lines "To A White Lilac":

I know you, ghost of some lone, delicate hour,
Long-gone but forgot;
Wherein I had for guerdon and for dower
That one thing I have not.

Unplucked I leave your mystical white feather,
O phantom up the lane ;
For back may come that spent and lovely weather,
And I be glad again !

To analyze this, would be to pluck the mystical white feather that a poet left untouched, that it might recall the grace of "some lone, delicate hour, long-gone but unforget;" but the soul of such an hour has subtilized for each of us in that spiritual memory-flower, and it needs no more than the opening line of this poem to invest the disillusioned day with a mood the same—yet not the same. Miss Reese has put it in two lines in her "Song of the Lavender Woman":

Oh, my heart, why should you break at any thoughts like these?

So sooth are they of the old time that they should bring you ease.

In another brief poem, the spirit of grief, that transmutes itself at last to music, to odor, to sunsets and dawns, becomes vital again in the scent of the box, the garden shrub. The lines show Miss Reese's susceptibility to impression from the most intangible sources:

Dark, thinned, beside the wall of stone,
The box dripped in the air ;
Its odor through my house was blown
Into the chamber there.

Remote and yet distinct the scent,
The sole thing of the kind,
As though one spoke a word half meant
That left a sting behind.

I knew not Grief would go from me
And naught of it be plain,
Except how keen the box can be
After a fall of rain.

Miss Reese's art is its apparent lack of art, of conscious effort. Her diction is as simple in the mere store of words which she chooses to employ, as might be that of some poet to whom such a store was his sole equipment; but what is that fine distinction between *simplesse* and *simplicité*? One recognizes in her vocabulary the subtlest art of choice and elimination, art that is temperament, however, that selects by intuitive fitness and not by formulas or deliberate trying of effects. The words she employs are thrice distilled and clarified, until they become the essence of lucidity, and this essence in turn is crystallized into form in her poems. Perhaps they have, for some, too little warmth and color; they are not the rich-dyed words of passion, they are rather the white, delicate words of memory, but no others would serve as well.

In reading certain poems of Miss Reese's,

such as "Trust," or her lines "Writ In A Book Of Elizabethan Verse," the clarity of the language recalls a passage in a letter of Jean Ingelow's in which she exclaims: "Oh that I might wash my words in light!" The impression which many of these lyrics convey is that Miss Reese *has washed her words in light*, so clear, so pure is their beauty. Take, for illustration, the much-quoted lines "Love Came Back At Fall O' Dew," and note the art and feeling achieved almost wholly in monosyllabic words:

Love came back at fall o' dew,
Playing his old part;
But I had a word or two,
That would break his heart.

"He who comes at candlelight,
That should come before,
Must betake him to the night
From a barréd door."

This the word that made us part
In the fall o' dew;
This the word that brake his heart—
Yet it brake mine, too!

A lyric imbued with charm, and into which a heart history is compressed, and yet employing but five or six words of more than one syllable! Is this not clarifying to a purpose? The lines

called "Trust," illustrate with equal minuteness the gift of putting into the simplest words some truth that seems to speak itself without calling attention to language or form, and, though having less of charm, they illustrate the point in question, that of absolute simplicity without insipidity. This is not, however, to be taken as advice to all poets to cultivate the monosyllabic style. Because Miss Reese can achieve such an effect through it, when she chooses, as "Love Came Back At Fall O' Dew," does not argue that another poet would not corrupt it to nursery babble, nor would it be desirable to strive for it in any case. Song is impulse, not effort, and back of it is temperament. Miss Reese is a poet-singer; she is at her best in the pure lyric, the lyric that could be sung, and therefore her most artistic poems are such as are the least ornate, but have rare distinction in the purity, fitness, and individuality of her words.

Very few modern lyrics possess the singing quality. The term "lyric verse," as used to-day, is a misnomer. It is as intricate in form and phrase as if not consecrated to the lyre by poets in the dawn of art. The divorce between poetry and song grows more absolute year by year; composers search almost vainly

through modern volumes of verse for lyrics that combine the melody and feeling, the spontaneity and grace, indispensable to song. It is not that the modern poet is unable to produce such, but that he does not choose. It has gone out of fashion, to state the case quite frankly, to write with a singing cadence; something rare and strange must issue from the poet's lips, something inobvious. Art lurks in surprises, and the poet of to-day must be a diviner of mysteries, a searcher of secrets, in nature and humanity and truth, and a revealer of them in his art, though he reveal oftentimes but to conceal.

Poetry grows more and more an intellectual pleasure for the cultured classes, less and less a possession of the people. Elizabethan song was upon the lips of the milkmaids and market-women, the common ear was trained to grace and melody; but how many of the country folk of to-day know the involved numbers of our poets, or, knowing, could grasp them? Who is writing the lays of the people? One can only answer that few are writing them because the spirit of poetic art has suffered a sea-change into something rich and strange, and the poet of to-day would be fearful of his laurels should he write so artless a song as "Gather ye rose-

buds while ye may," or "Come live with me and be my love," and yet these are beads that Time tells over on the rosary of Art.

The question is too broad to discuss here. We should all agree, doubtless, as to the increasing separation between poetry and song, the increasing tendency of verse to appeal to the cultured classes; but as to the desirability of returning to the simpler form, adapting theme and melody to the common ear — how many modern poets would agree upon that? There is a middle ground, however; the reaction against the highly ornate is already felt, and a finer art may be trusted to bring its own adjustments until poetry will again become of universal appeal.

And how does this pertain to Miss Reese? It pertains in that her ideal is the very return to clear, sympathetic song of which we have spoken. She would recapture the blitheness of Herrick, the valor of Lovelace, would lighten song's wings of their heaviness and shift Care and Wisdom to more prosaic burden-bearers. While the reminiscent mood is prevalent in her work, it is not melancholy, but has rather the iridescent glint of smiles and tears. Joy never quite departs, although "with finger at his lip, bidding adieu." Miss Reese's strife is toward

~~a valiant cheer~~, whose passing she deplores in the poem called "Laughter":

Spirit of the gust and dew,
Herrick had the last of you !
Empty are the morning hills.
Herrick, he whose hearty airs
Still are heard in our dull squares ;
Herrick of the daffodils !

Now the pulpit and the mart
Make an unquiet thing of Art,
For we trade or else we preach ;
Even the crocus, 'stead of song,
Serves for text the April long ;
Thus we set it out of reach.

There is heartier food than ambrosia in this stanza. It is true that when we use the crocus for a text we set it out of reach, or, in common phrase, when poetry becomes didactic, Art flees. A dew-fresh song would teach the crocus' lesson, or many another lesson, without a hint of teaching it, merely by beauty; by the creed of Keats. Pope's didactic, sententious lines are gone; but Keats, who never pointed a moral in his life, sings on eternally. Miss Reese too is votary to beauty for its own sake; she gives one the flower, and he may extract the nectar for himself. The nectar is always there for one's distilling into the truth which is the essence of

things. She does not herself extract and distil it, for hers is the art of suggestion.

Having this creed of song, Miss Reese's themes are not widely inclusive. They are, however, the universal themes,—love, beauty, reverence, remembrance, joy that has been tempered to cheer, having met pain by the way; for, as we have said, no encounter with pain — and her poems give abundant evidence of such encounter — has been able to subdue the valor of her spirit, or to quench the joy at the springs of her feeling, albeit the buoyant, brimful joy has given place to acquiescent cheer.

There is a certain quality in Miss Reese's poems, a quaintness, an elder grace, that is wholly unique. It is the union of theme, phraseology, and atmosphere. The two former have been considered, but the spirit, after all, is in the last, in that which analysis cannot reach. One selects a poem from *A Quiet Road* illustrative of this art of correlating Then and Now, making quick the dead in memory and hope, and sets about to analyze it,—when, lo, as if one had prisoned a white butterfly, it escapes, leaving only the dust of its wing in one's hand! Miss Reese's poems are not to be analyzed, they are to be felt; that, too, is the creed of her song.

Is it difficult to feel these delicate lines called
“The Road of Remembrance”? —

The old wind stirs the hawthorn tree ;
The tree is blossoming ;
Northward the road runs to the sea,
And past the House of Spring.

The folk go down it unafraid ;
The still roofs rise before ;
When you were lad and I was maid,
Wide open stood that door.

Now, other children crowd the stair,
And hunt from room to room ;
Outside, under the hawthorn fair,
We pluck the thorny bloom.

Out in the quiet road we stand,
Shut in from wharf and mart,
The old wind blowing up the land,
The old thoughts at our heart.

Miss Reese's growth, as shown in her two volumes, is so marked that while *A Handful of Lavender* has the foreshadowing of her later work, and also some notably fine poems, — such as “That Day You Came,” “The Last Cricket,” “A Spinning Song,” and “The Old Path,” — it has not the same perfectly individual note that pervades *A Quiet Road*. The personal mark, the artist-proof mark, upon nearly everything in the later collection, is fre-

quently absent from the first. That part of *A Handful of Lavender* first issued as *A Branch of May* is naturally the least finished of Miss Reese's work. It is unsure and yet indicative of that —

Oncoming hour of light and dew,
Of heartier sun, more certain blue,

which shines in her later work.

“The Death Potion,” from the first collection, is a case in point: it is strong in idea, and here and there in execution, but its metre is faulty, and it departs so often from the initial measure that one who has set himself in tune with that is thrown from the key, and in adapting himself to the changed rhythm loses the pleasure of the poem.

It must be said, however, that such lack of metrical sensitiveness is very rare even in the earlier poems. In general, they are of unimpeachable rhythm; indeed, the singing note is so much Miss Reese's natural expression that it creeps into this sonnet, “The Old Path,” and turns it in effect to a lyric:

O Love ! O Love ! this way has hints of you
In every bough that stirs, in every bee,
Yellow and glad, droning the thick grass through,
In blooms red on the bush, white on the tree ;

And when the wind, just now, came soft and fleet,
Scattering the blackberry blossoms, and from some
Fast darkening space that thrush sang sudden sweet,
You were so near, so near, yet did not come !
Say, is it thus with you, O friend, this day ?
Have you, for me that love you, thought or word ?
Do I, with bud or bough, pass by your way ;
With any breath of brier or note of bird ?
If this I knew, though you be quick or dead,
All my sad life would I go comforted.

A Handful of Lavender shows the tendency of most young poets to affect the sonnet, a tendency laudable enough if one be a natural sonneteer. Miss Reese has many finely conceived and well-executed sonnets, but few that are unforgettably fine, as are many of her lyrics. That she recognizes wherein her surest power lies is obvious from the fact that, whereas *A Handful of Lavender* contains some thirty-two sonnets, *A Quiet Road* contains but twelve. Those of nature predominated in the former, nature for its own sake; but in the latter there is far less accent upon nature and more upon life.

They show in technique, also, Miss Reese's firmer, surer touch and greater clarity. There are certain sonnets in *A Handful of Lavender* such as "A Song of Separation," and "Renunciation," warmer in feeling than the later ones.

and equal to them in manner ; but in general the mechanism is much more apparent — one *does* occasionally see the wires, which is never the case in the later work.

“The Look of the Hedge,” or these lines called “Recompense,” will illustrate the ease and lucidity of her sonnets in *A Quiet Road*:

Sometimes, yea, often, I forget, forget ;
Pass your closed door with not a thought of you,
Of the old days, but only of these new ;
I sow ; I reap ; my house in order set.
Then of a sudden doth this thing befall,
By a wood’s edge, or in the market-place,
That I remember naught but your dead face,
And other folk forgotten, you are all.
When this is so, oh, sooth the time and sweet !
And I, thereafter, am like unto one
Who from the lilac bloom and the young year
Comes to a chamber shuttered from the street,
Yet heeds nor emptiness nor lack of sun,
For that the recompensing Spring is near !

There are excellently wrought sonnets in the first volume, indeed, the majority of them are not without fine lines or true feeling, but the gain in command of the form has been marked. When all is said, however, one comes back to *A Quiet Road* for the songs it holds, and for these he treasures it. Miss Reese has epitomized, in her lines “Writ In A Book Of

Elizabethan Verse," her own characteristics under those of the earlier singers, sounded the delicate notes of her own reed, when she says:

Mine is the crocus and the call
Of gust to gust in shrubberies tall ;
The white tumult, the rainy hush ;
And mine the unforgetting thrush
That pours its heart-break from the wall.

For I am tears, for I am Spring,
The old and immemorial thing ;
To me come ghosts by twos and threes,
Under the swaying cherry-trees,
From east and west remembering.

O elder Hour, when I am not,
Gone out like smoke from road and plot,
More perfect Hour of light and dew,
Shall lovers turn away from you,
And long for me, the Unforgot !

Surely they will, for clear, pure song keeps its vibrancy, and the note to which is set the quaintness of such words as these in Miss Reese's poem "A Pastoral," will not easily be forgotten :

Oho, my love, oho, my love, and ho, the bough that shows,
Against the grayness of mid-Lent, the color of the rose !
The lights o' Spring are in the sky and down among the grass ;
Bend low, bend low, ye Kentish reeds, and let two lovers pass !

The plum-tree is a straitened thing ; the cherry is but vain ;
The thorn but black and empty at the turning of the lane ;
Yet mile by mile out in the wind the peach-trees blow and
 blow,
And which is stem and which is bloom, not any maid can
 know.

The ghostly ships sail up to town and past the orchard wall ;
There is a leaping in the reeds ; they waver and they fall ;
For lo, the gusts of God are out ; the April time is brief ;
The country is a pale red rose, and dropping leaf by leaf.

I do but keep me close beside and hold my lover's hand ;
Along the narrow track we pass across the level land ;
The petals whirl about us and the sedge is to our knees ;
The ghostly ships sail up, sail up, beyond the stripping trees.

When we are old, when we are cold, and barréed is the door,
The memory of this will come and turn us young once
 more ;
The lights o' Spring will dim the grass and tremble from the
 sky ;
And all the Kentish reeds bend low to let us two go by !

Miss Reese's work in *A Quiet Road* is so uniformly quotable that one distrusts his judgment in the matter of choice, and having cited one poem as representative comes suddenly upon another that might have served him better; such an one, perhaps, is that to Robert Louis Stevenson, in its penetrative feeling, showing Miss Reese to be a diviner of spirits. One

need hardly be told that she is of the “mystic fellowcraft” of Stevenson, and although the very name of the valorous one has become a sort of fetish among his lovers everywhere, one would go far to find him set forth more bravely than in this characterization, of which a part must suffice to show the quality:

In his old gusty garden of the North,
He heard lark-time the uplifting Voices call ;
Smitten through with Voices was the evenfall —
At last they drove him forth.

Now there were two rang silverly and long ;
And of Romance, that spirit of the sun,
And of Romance, spirit of youth, was one ;
And one was that of Song.

Gold-belted sailors, bristling buccaneers,
The flashing soldier, and the high, slim dame,
These were the Shapes that all around him came,-
That we let go with tears.

His was the unstinted English of the Scot,
Clear, nimble, with the scriptural tang of Knox
Thrust through it like the far, strict scent of box,
To keep it unforgot.

No frugal Realist, but quick to laugh,
To see appealing things in all he knew,
He plucked the sun-sweet corn his fathers grew,
And would have naught of chaff.

David and Keats and all good singing men,
Take to your hearts this Covenanter's son,
Gone in mid-years, leaving our years undone —
Where you do sing again !

There ! I have repented me and quoted it all,
to preserve the unity.

To be rare and quaint without being fantastic, to have swift-conceiving fancy that turns into poetry the near-by thing that many overlook — this is Miss Reese's gift. You shall not go to her for ethics, philosophy, nor for instruction of any kind, for that is contrary to her creed ; but you shall go to her for truth, truth that has become personal through experience ; go to her for beauty, uplift, and refreshment, and above all for the recovery of the departed mood.

III

BLISS CARMAN

THE presence of Mr. Carman, a Canadian singer, among a group of poets of the States, needs no explanation; so identified is he with the artistic life of the younger generation on this side the border that we have come to forget his earlier allegiance, and to consider his work, most of which has been produced here, as distinctly our own. But while it is gratifying to feel that so much of his verse has drawn its inspiration from nature and life as we know them, one could little spare Mr. Carman's first book of lyrics, *Low Tide on Grand Pré*, which is purely Canadian—set in the air of the “blue North summer.”

It lacks as a collection the confident touch of his later work, but is imbued with an indefinable delicacy; it withholds the uttermost word, and its grace is that of suggestion. Especially is this true of the initial poem, a lyric with a poignant undernote calling one back thrice and again to learn its spell.

It has been Mr. Carman's method to issue at intervals small volumes containing work of a related sort; but it is open to question whether this method of publishing, with the harmony which results from grouping each collection under a certain key, may not have a counter-balancing danger in the tendency toward monotony. As a matter of fact, Mr. Carman has a wide range of subject; but unless one be ever taking a bird's-eye view of his work, it is likely to seem restricted, owing to the reiteration of the same note in whatever collection he chance to have in hand. A case in point is that furnished by *Ballads of Lost Haven*, one of his most characteristic and fascinating volumes, a very wizardy of sea moods, yet it has no fewer than four poems, succeeding one another at the close of the collection, prefiguring death under the titles of "The Shadow Boatswain," "The Master of the Isles," "The Last Watch," and "Outbound."

Each of these is blended of mystery, lure, and dread; each conveys the feeling it was meant to convey; but when the four poems of similar motive are grouped together, their force is lost. The symbols which seem in each to rise as spontaneously from the sea as its own foam, lose their magic when others of like import, but different

phrasing, crowd closely upon them. For illustration, the "Shadow Boatswain" contains these fine lines:

Don't you know the sailing orders?
It is time to put to sea,
And the stranger in the harbor
Sends a boat ashore for me.

.
That's the Doomkeel. You may know her
By her clean run aft; and then
Don't you hear the Shadow Boatswain
Piping to his shadow men?

And "The Master of the Isles," immediately following, opens in this equally picturesque, but essentially similar, manner:

There is rumor in Dark Harbor,
And the folk are all astir;
For a stranger in the offing
Draws them down to gaze at her,

In the gray of early morning,
Black against the orange streak,
Making in below the ledges,
With no colors at her peak.

While each of the poems develops differently, and taken alone has a symbolistic beauty that would fix itself in the memory, when the two are put together and are followed by two others cognate in theme, the lines of relief have melted into one indistinct image. This effect of blurr-





ing from the grouping of related poems is not so apparent in any collection as in the sea ballads, as the subject-matter of the other volumes is more diversified and the likelihood of employing somewhat the same imagery is therefore removed; but while Mr. Carman has a very witchery of phrase when singing of the sea, and his words sting one with delight like a dash of brine, one would, for that very reason, keep the impression vivid, forceful, complete, and grudges the merging of it into others and yet others that shall dissipate it or transform it to an impalpable thing.

Judging them individually, it is doubtful if Mr. Carman has done anything more representative, more imbued with his own temperament, than these buoyant, quickening songs that freshen one as if from a plunge in the sea, and take one to themselves as intimately. The opening poem sets the key to the collection:

I was born for deep-sea faring ;
I was bred to put to sea ;
Stories of my father's daring
Filled me at my mother's knee.

I was sired among the surges ;
I was cubbed beside the foam ;
All my heart is in its verges,
And the sea wind is my home.

All my boyhood, from far vernal
 Bourns of being, came to me
 Dream-like, plangent, and eternal
 Memories of the plunging sea.

And what a gruesome, eerie fascination is in
 this picture at whose faithfulness one shudders:

Oh, the shambling sea is a sexton old,
 And well his work is done.
 With an equal grave for lord and knave,
 He buries them every one.

Then hoy and rip, with a rolling hip,
 He makes for the nearest shore ;
 And God, who sent him a thousand ship,
 Will send him a thousand more ;
 But some he 'll save for a bleaching grave,
 And shoulder them in to shore,—
 Shoulder them in, shoulder them in,
 Shoulder them in to shore.

How the swing of the lines befits the action,
 and how it puts on grace in this stanza,

Oh, the ships of Greece and the ships of Tyre
 Went out, and where are they?
 In the port they made, they are delayed
 With the ships of yesterday.

The remaining strophes tempt one beyond
 what he is able, especially this characterization,

Oh, a loafing, idle lubber to him
 Is the sexton of the town ;

but we must take a glance at the ballads, at the "Nancy's Pride," that went out

On the long slow heave of a lazy sea,
To the flap of an idle sail,

and

. . . faded down
With her creaking boom a-swing,
Till a wind from the deep came up with a creep,
And caught her wing and wing.

. . .
She lifted her hull like a breasting gull
Where the rolling valleys be,
And dipped where the shining porpoises
Put ploughshares through the sea.

. . .
They all may home on a sleepy tide
To the sag of an idle sheet;
But it's never again the Nancy's Pride
That draws men down the street.

But the fishermen on the Banks, in the eerie
watches of the moon, behold this apparition:

When the light wind veers, and the white fog clears,
They see by the after rail
An unknown schooner creeping up
With mildewed spar and sail.

Her crew lean forth by the rotting shrouds,
With the Judgment in their face;
And to their mates' "God save you!"
Have never a word of grace.

Then into the gray they sheer away,
On the awful polar tide ;
And the sailors know they have seen the wraith
Of the missing Nancy's Pride

There have been spectral ships since visions
were, but few conjured so vividly that one may
almost see the

crew lean forth by the rotting shrouds
With the Judgment in their face,

and watch them as

into the gray they sheer away
On the awful polar tide.

The poem illustrates Mr. Carman's gift of putting atmosphere into his work. A line may give the color, the setting, for an entire poem,—a very simple line, as this,

With her creaking boom a-swing,

or, "To the sag of an idle sheet," which fixes at once the impression of a sultry, languorous air, one of those, half-veiled, "weather-breeder" days one knows so well.

From a narrative standpoint the ballads are spirited, there is always a story worth telling; but they are occasionally marred by Mr. Carman's prolixity, the besetting sin of his art. He who can crowd so much into a line is often lacking in the faculty of its appraisal, and fre-

quently a crisp, telling phrase or stanza is weakened by the accretion that gathers around it. Beauty is rarely wanting in this accretion, but beauty that is not organic, not structurally necessary to the theme, becomes verbiage. Walter Pater has said it all in his fine passage: "For in truth all art does but consist in the removal of surplusage, from the last finish of the gem-engraver blowing away the last particle of invisible dust, back to the earliest divination of the finished work to be, lying somewhere, according to Michael Angelo's fancy, in the rough-hewn block of stone." It is not Mr. Carman's divination of the finished work to be that is at fault; one feels that the subject is clearly visioned in his mind at the outset, but that it proves in some cases too alluring to his fancy. His work is not artificial; he is not fashioning poetic bric-à-brac to adorn his verse; sincerity is writ large upon it; but his mood is so compelling that he is carried on by the force of momentum, and finding, when the impulse is spent, so much beauty left behind, he has not the heart to destroy it.

One pardons this over-elaboration in *Ballads of Lost Haven* because of the likelihood of coming upon a pungent phrase, like a whiff of kelp, that shall transform some arid spot to the

blue leagues of sea; and for such a poem as "The Ships of St. John," with no superfluous lines, with a calm, sabbatic beauty, one is wholly Mr. Carman's debtor.

Behind the Arras has proven a stumbling-block and rock of offence to some of Mr. Carman's readers, because of its recondite character. They regard it as something esoteric that only the initiate may grasp, whereas its mysticism is half whimsical, and requires no superconsciousness to divine it. Mr. Carman is founding no cult; it pleases him for the nonce to mask his thought in symbols, and there are, alas, minds of the rectangular sort that have no use for symbols! It is a book containing many strong poems, such as "Beyond the Gamut," "Exit Anima," and "Hack and Hew,"—a book of spiritual enigmas through which one catches hints of the open secret, ever-alluring, ever-eluding, and follows new clews to the mystery, immanent, yet undivined.

Earth one habitat of spirit merely,
I must use as richly as I may,—
Touch environment with every sense-tip,
Drink the well and pass my wander way,—

says this sane poet who holds his gift as a tribute, whose philosophy is to affirm and not deny:

O hand of mine and brain of mine, be yours,
While time endures,
To acquiesce and learn !
For what we best may dare and drudge and yearn,
Let soul discern.

And who through the grime and in the babel
still sees and hears,

Always the flawless beauty, — always the Chord
Of the Overword,
Dominant, pleading, sure,
No truth too small to save and make endure ;
No good too poor !

This is the vision that shall lighten our eyes, quicken our ears, and restore our hope,—the vision which we expect the poet to see and to communicate. He must make the detached and fragmentary beauty a typical revelation; the relative must foreshadow the absolute, as the moon's arc reveals by its mystic rim the fulness to which it is orbing. It is not by disregarding the tragic, the sombre, the inexplicable, that Mr. Carman comes into his vision. Pain has more than touched him; it has become incorporate in him. *Low Tide on Grand Pré* has its poignant note; *Ballads of Lost Haven*, its undertone; *Behind the Arras*, its overtone, its sublimation.

Mr. Carman's work is more subjective than that of many of the younger poets without being less objective, as the *Vagabondia* books attest. In one mood he is the mystic, dwelling in a speculative nebula of thought, in another the realist concerning himself only with the demonstrable, and hence his work discloses a wide range of affinities. He is not a strongly constructive thinker, but intuitional in his mental processes, and his verse demands that gift in his readers. Without it what could one make of "The Juggler" but a poem of delicious color and music? If its import were none other than appears upon the face of it, it would still be admirable, but as a symbol of the Force projecting us, it is a subtle bit of art.

Mr. Carman's sensitiveness to values of rhythm keeps his verse free from lapses in that direction. He never, to my memory, makes use of the sonnet, which shows critical judgment, as the lyric is his temperamental medium. The apogee of his art is in his diction, which has a predestined fitness, and above all a personal quality. To quote Pater again, he has "begotten a vocabulary faithful to the coloring of his own spirit," and one cannot mistake even a fragment of his verse. Now and again one comes upon an archaic expres-

sion, as "A *weird* is in their song," using the ancient noun-form, or upon such a meaningless solecism, at least to the uninitiate, as "illumining this *quench* of clay," but in general Mr. Carman does not find it necessary to go outside the established limits of the language for variety and force in diction. He has a genius for imagery, and conjures the most unsullied fancies from every aspect of nature. The Vagabondia books are abrim with them, and while there are idle lines and padded stanzas, there are few of the poems that do not strike true flashes here and there, few that miss of justification, while their gay and rollicking note heartens one and bids him up and join in the revel.

There are others in a graver key, such as Hovey's "At the End of the Day," and Carman's "The Mendicants," and "The Marching Mornings;" and certain lyric inspirations, such as the "Sea Gypsy," by Hovey, and the "Vagabond Song," by Carman, that have not been bettered by either, that could not well be bettered within their limits. The former has been quoted in the study of Hovey; the latter is equally an inspiration. Within the confines of two stanzas Mr. Carman has suggested what volumes of nature-verse could never say. He does not

analyze it to a finish, nor let the magic slip through his fingers; under his touch it subtilizes into atmosphere and thus communicates the incommunicable:

There is something in the autumn that is native to my blood —

Touch of manner, hint of mood;

And my heart is like a rhyme,

With the yellow and the purple and the crimson keeping time.

The scarlet of the maples can shake me like a cry
Of bugles going by.

And my lonely spirit thrills

To see the frosty asters like a smoke upon the hills.

There is something in October sets the gypsy blood astir;

We must rise and follow her,

When from every hill of flame

She calls and calls each vagabond by name.

Throwing aside all that is ephemeral in the Vagabondia books, all mere boyish ebullition, there is a goodly residuum of nature-poetry of the freshest and most unhackneyed sort. It is the blithe, objective type; eyes and ears are its informers, and it enters into one's mood with a keen sense of refreshment. Who does not know the impulse that prompted these lines?

Make me over, mother April,
When the sap begins to stir !
When thy flowery hand delivers
All the mountain-prisoned rivers,
And thy great heart beats and quivers
To revive the days that were,
Make me over, mother April,
When the sap begins to stir !

The temper of the *Vagabondia* books is thoroughly wholesome; courage and cheer dominate them; in short, they are good to know; and while it is not vitally necessary to remember all they contain, one would be distinctly the loser should he forget such poems as "Non Omnis Moriar" or "The Deserted Inn" from *The Last Songs*.

The collection of Memorabilia, *By the Aurelian Wall*, takes its title from the burial-place of Keats, and includes "A Seamount," the fine threnody on Stevenson; a thrilling eulogy of Phillips Brooks; a spiritual, poetic visioning of Shelley under the symbol of "The White Gull;" a Bohemian lyric to Paul Verlaine, and other things equally well-wrought. Some of them need distilling; the poem to Shelley, in particular, volatilizes to the vanishing-point—but what haunting sweetness it carries with it! To be sure, Shelley is elusive, and Matthew Arnold's "beautiful but ineffectual angel, beat-

ing in the void his luminous wings in vain," has come to dominate the popular fancy in regard to him. Mr. Carman's poem, though touched with this mood, is not set to it, and he has several stanzas which have in them the essence of Shelley's spirit,—the real Shelley, the passionate idealist, the spent runner who, falling, handed on the torch.

The Stevenson threnody is probably the best of the elegies, as Mr. Carman is by temperament one of the Stevenson brotherhood, and no subject could better command him. That "intimate and magic name," a password to fellowship, conjures many a picture of him—

Whose courage lights the dark'ning port
Where every sea-worn sail must come.

Mr. Carman has singular power to visualize a scene; one becomes an eye-witness of it as of this:

But I have wander-biddings now.
Far down the latitudes of sun,
An island mountain of the sea,
Piercing the green and rosy zone,

Goes up into the wondrous day.
And there the brown-limbed island men
Are bearing up for burial,
Within the sun's departing ken,

The master of the roving kind,
And there where time will set no mark
For his irrevocable rest,
Under the spacious melting dark,

With all the nomad tented stars
About him, they have laid him down
Above the crumbling of the sea,
Beyond the turmoil of renown.

This island procession to the mountain, leaving
the master to his "irrevocable rest,"

Under the spacious melting dark,
With all the nomad tented stars
About him,

is an artist's picture not easily forgotten.

Mr. Carman's three volumes in the projected "Pipes of Pan" series, including thus far *The Book of the Myths*, *The Green Book of the Bards*, and *The Sea Children*, make new disclosures of his talent, and the title poem "Pipes of Pan," is a bit of anointed vision that would waken the dullest eyes from lethargy as to the world around them. There is necromancy in Mr. Carman's words when the outer world is his theme; something of the thrill, the expectancy in the heart of growing things, the elation of life, comes upon one as he reads the "Pipes of Pan." It is a nobler vision than illumined Vagabondia days, revealing

Power out of hurt and stain
To bring beauty back again,

and showing the

Scope and purpose, hint and plan
Lurking in the Pipes of Pan,

as well as the sheer delight that we noted in *Vagabondia*.

It seems that every mood of every creature has been divined and uttered, uttered with deep love, with a human relatedness that melts the barriers between life and life, whether in man or in

All the bright, gay-colored things
Buoyed in air on balanced wings.

This relatedness, and all the molding influences of nature leading us on from beauty to strength, are developed in Mr. Carman's poem until they become to us religion. We realize that at heart we are all pantheists, and that revelation antedates the Book ; that the law is written on the leaves of roses as well as on tables of stone,—a testament both new and old, given for our learning that we might have hope.

The remaining poems of *The Book of the Myths* are not the best things Mr. Carman has done, though renewals of classic verse-forms in the Sapphic and other metres, and often

picturesque in story. "The Lost Dryad" is the most attractive, "The Dead Faun" the least so, to my ears; but perhaps from lack of sympathy with the subject-matter I cannot think the collection, with the exception of the poem "Pipes of Pan," is of especial value. It is not to be named, still excepting the above poem, with its companion volume, *The Green Book of the Bards*, which contains some of the strongest work of Mr. Carman's pen as to subject and thought, but which has one pronounced limitation,—its monotony of form.

The entire volume, with a sole exception, and that not marked, is written in the conventional four-line stanza, in which so much of Mr. Carman's work of late has been cast. Within this compass, the accomplishment is as varied as to theme and diction, as that of his other work; but when one sings on and on in the same numbers, it induces a state of mental indolence in the reader, and presupposes a similar state in the writer. The verse goes purling musically along, until, as running water exercises an hypnotic spell, one is hypnotized by the mere melody of the lines, and comes to consciousness to find that he has no notion what they are about, and must re-read them to find out. To be sure, the poems will bear reviewing, and

will make new disclosures whenever one returns to them; but had they greater variety as to manner, their appeal would be stronger, as the mind would be startled to perception by unexpectedness, instead of lulled by the same note in liquid reiteration. It is quite possible that Mr. Carman has a principle at stake in this,—it may indeed be a reactionary measure against over-evident mechanism, a wholesome desire for simplicity. Now simplicity is one of the first canons of art, but variety in metre and form is another canon by no means nulling the first. One may have variety to the superlative degree, and never depart from the fitness and clearness that spell simplicity.

Were *The Green Book of the Bards* relieved by contrasts of form, it would rank with the finest work of Mr. Carman's pen, as the individual poems have strong basic ideas,—such as the "Creature Catechism," full of pregnant thought, and speaking a vital, spiritual word as to the mystic union of the creative Soul with the creatures of feather and fin and fleece. The marked evolution of Mr. Carman's philosophy of life, as influenced by his growing identity with nature, comes out so strongly in the "Pipes of Pan" series, and in *The Word at Saint Kavin's*, as almost to reveal a new in-

dividuality. He had gone out in the light-foot, light-heart days of Vagabondia, holidaying with the woods and winds; glad to be quit of the gyves, to drink from the wayside spring, eat of the forest fruit, sleep 'neath the tent of night, and dream to the rune of the pines. He had sought nature in a mood of pagan joy; but the wayside spring had excited a thirst it could not quench, and the forest fruit a hunger it could not allay, and the blithe seeker of freedom and delight became at length the anointed votary, and lingered to watch the God at work shaping life from death, and expressing His yearning in beauty.

The mere objective delight of the earlier time has grown steadily into the subjective identity with every manifestation of the Force that operates within this world of wonder and beauty, from the soul of man, shaping his ideals and creating his environment, to the butterfly whose sun-painted wings, set afloat in the buoyant air, are upheld by the breath of God. Coming into the finer knowledge, through long intimacy with the earth and its multitudinous life, fulfilling itself in joy,—Mr. Carman has come at length to

readjust

The logic of the dust,

and to shape from it a creed and law for his following, which he has put into the mouth of Saint Kavin for expounding. The opening stanzas of the volume give the setting and note:

Once at St. Kavin's door
I rested. No sigh more
Of discontent escaped me from that day.
For there I overheard
A Brother of the Word
Expound the grace of poverty, and say :

Thank God for poverty
That makes and keeps us free,
And lets us go our unobtrusive way,
Glad of the sun and rain,
Upright, serene, humane,
Contented with the fortune of a day.

The poem follows simple, but no less picturesque phrase, as becomes Saint Kavin, and is, from the technical side, quaint and artistic. On the philosophical, it develops at first the initial thought that one shall "keep his soul"

Joyous and sane and whole
by obeying the word
That bade the earth take form, the sea subside,
and that
When we have laid aside
Our truculence and pride,
Craven self-seeking, turbulent self-will,—

we shall have found the boon of our ultimate striving,—room to live and let our spirits grow, and give of their growth and higher gain to another. Here is the giving that turns to one's own enrichment:

And if I share my crust,
As common manhood must,
With one whose need is greater than my own,
Shall I not also give
His soul, that it may live,
Of the abundant pleasures I have known?

And so, if I have wrought,
Amassed or conceived aught
Of beauty, or intelligence or power,
It is not mine to hoard;
It stands there to afford
Its generous service simply as a flower.

The poem then broadens into a dissertation upon the complexities of life, one's servitude to custom and "vested wrong," the lack of individual courage to

Live by the truth each one of us believes, and turns, for illustration of the nobler development and poise, back to nature, and the evolutionary round of life through which one traces his course and kinship. These stanzas are among the finest spoken by the wise

Brother of the Word. After citing the strength and serenity of the fir-trees, and what a travesty upon man's ascent it were, did one bear himself less royally than they, he adverts to the creature kin-fellows whose lot we have borne:

I, too, in polar night
Have hungered, gaunt and white,
Alone amid the awful silences ;
And fled on gaudy fin,
When the blue tides came in,
Through coral gardens under tropic seas.

And wheresoe'er I strove,
The greater law was love,
A faith too fine to falter or mistrust ;
There was no wanton greed,
Depravity of breed,
Malice nor cant nor enmity unjust.

Nay, not till I was man,
Learned I to scheme and plan
The blackest depredation on my kind,
Converting to my gain
My fellow's need and pain
In chartered pillage, ruthless and refined.

Therefore, my friends, I say
Back to the fair sweet way
Our Mother Nature taught us long ago,—
The large primeval mood,
Leisure and amplitude,
The dignity of patience strong and slow.

Let us go in once more
By some blue mountain door,
And hold communion with the forest leaves ;
Where long ago we trod
The Ghost House of the God,
Through orange dawns and amethystine eves !

Then follows a glad picturing of the allurements of this place of return, a more thoughtful one of its requitals, and the infinitude of care bestowed upon every task to which the Master Craftsman sets his hand, and orbs into a vision of the soul enlarged by breathing the freer air and by regaining therefrom her "primal ecstasy and poise." It traces also the soul's commission,

To fill her purport in the ampler plan.

Altogether the Word is admirably expounded by Saint Kavin, and one is distinctly the gainer for having rested at his door to learn not only the grace of joyousness, but the means to that grace.

In his latest work, constructing from the "fragments" of Sappho lyrics that should bear as close relation to the original as an imagination imbued with the Sapphic traditions and a temperament sympathetically Greek would enable him to do, — Mr. Carman undertook a daring task, but one whose promise he

has made good, as poetry, however near it may approach to the imagined loveliness of those lost songs of the Lesbian, which have served by their haunting beauty to keep vital her memory through twenty-five centuries in which unnumbered names have gone to oblivion.

Of the "Ode to Aphrodite," the most complete Sapphic poem extant, many translations and paraphrases have been made, those by Edwin Arnold, John Addington Symonds, Ambrose Philips, Swinburne, etc., being among the finest; and were there space it would be interesting to show by comparison that Mr. Carman's rendering of the Ode ranks well with the standard already set.

Of the fragments, also, while perhaps no previous attempt has been made to give an imaginative recast to so large a number of them, many have been incorporated by Swinburne in his "Anactoria," and fugitive stanzas in the work of Rossetti, Tennyson, Byron, and others, attest this source. To refashion them, however, after the manner, as Mr. Roberts says in his introduction to the volume, of a sculptor restoring a statue by Praxiteles from the mere suggestion of a hand or a finger,—is a work of artistic imagination demanding the finest sympathy, taste, and kinship with the theme, as

well as the poet's touch to shape it; and while no one may pronounce upon the fidelity of the work, beyond its Greek spirit and command of the Sapphic metres, together with the interpretation of the original fragment, it has great charm of phrase and atmosphere and a certain pensive beauty even in the most impassioned stanzas, setting them to a different note from that usually met in Sapphic paraphrases; as in these lines:

O heart of insatiable longing,
What spell, what enchantment allures thee,
Over the rim of the world
With the sails of the sea-going ships?

And when the rose petals are scattered
At dead of still noon on the grass-plot,
What means this passionate grief,—
This infinite ache of regret?¹

Among the most familiar of the fragments is that of the "apple reddening upon the top-most bough," which Rossetti has put into charming phrase, together with its companion verse upon the wild hyacinth; but while these lines are of haunting charm, they do not make a complete stanza, the comparison being un-

¹ From Sappho : One Hundred Lyrics. Copyright, 1903, by L. C. Page & Co.

known; whereas Mr. Carman, in recasting the fragment, has supplied a logical complement to the lines and symmetrized them, together with their companion illustration, to a lyric. His rendering, too, while less musical, from being unrhymed, is picturesque and concise, each word being made to tell as a stroke in a sketch:

Art thou the topmost apple
The gatherers could not reach,
Reddening on the bough?
Shall not I take thee?

Art thou a hyacinth blossom
The shepherds upon the hills
Have trodden into the ground?
Shall not I lift thee?

The first Rossetti stanza ends with a fantastic play upon words explaining that, although the gatherers did not get the coveted apple, they

Forgot it not, nay, but got it not, for none could get it till now,

which, although a pleasant poetical mix-up, is hardly in keeping with the dignity of the comparison, which dignity Mr. Carman has well preserved.

Another fragment made familiar by adaptation is that to Hesperus, expanded by Byron

into one of the great passages of "Don Juan." Mr. Carman gives a more compact rendering and again brings the lines to such a close as shall render them a complete lyric. They scarcely vie in beauty with the Byron passage, which is one of the surest strokes of his hand, but have their own charm and grace:

Hesperus, bringing together
All that the morning star scattered, —

Sheep to be folded in twilight,
Children for mothers to fondle, —

Me, too, will bring to the dearest,
Tenderest breast in all Lesbos.

The fragment, "I loved thee, Athis, in the long ago," has been expanded by Mr. Carman into a poem of reminiscent mood, the long, slow-moving pentameter enhancing the effect of pensive meditation which the lines convey. Many of the fragments are of a blither note, having the variety which distinguishes the original.

Mr. Carman has exercised a fine restraint in his treatment of the fragments. They are not over-ripe in diction, nor over-elaborated, and while there is a certain atmosphere of insubstantiality about many of them, as could

scarcely fail to result from the attempt to restore, by imagination alone, what had existence but in tradition, they justify themselves as artistic poetry, which is the only consideration of moment.

IV

LOUISE IMOGEN GUINEY

SOME critic has said of Miss Guiney's work, that to come suddenly upon it among other volumes of modern poetry is like coming upon a Greek temple in an American woodland; and the comparison is an apt one, though the temple should scarcely be Greek, for while the feeling and structure of the work are classic in atmosphere, they are not warm enough, sensuous enough, to be Greek. It would, indeed, be hard to say with what race classicism Miss Guiney's work is tinctured. Rather say that she is a classic by temperament and has drawn to herself, as by chemical affinity, such things as are rare and choice in the world of books and life, and has fused them in the alembic of her own nature, until the resultant blend is something new and strange, having a racy tang and a flavor all its own, and yet with a hint of all the elements that went to its compounding.

Most minds take on learning by a miscellaneous accretion that results in information

without individuality, but Miss Guiney hives in many fields and lands the quaint, the picturesque, the beautiful, to which her temperament calls her unerringly, and can no more be tempted to range outside her limit of attraction than a bee to waste his precious hours dipping into bloom that holds no nectar for him. To be sure, Miss Guiney's range of attraction is wide, but it enlarges its own confines, and does not reach out to alien territory. It follows as a corollary to this fact that unless one be in the range of attraction with Miss Guiney, the subjects which claim her thought may be more or less alien to him, and the restrained, wholly individual manner of her work may be equally alien to his nature. He may require more warmth, more abandon, more of the element of to-day and to-morrow in the theme and mood; for Miss Guiney has little to do with the times and conditions in which she finds herself; contemporary life is only incidentally in her verse, and one would have difficulty from it in declaring her day and generation. Her poetry demands that synchronism of temperament by which one responds to her mood independent of the time or place to which it transports him.

Take, for illustration, "A Friend's Song for



Simoisius," with its charm of music, its beauty of expression, and its crystal clarity. Few would be unconscious of the poetic side of it; but to how many would the subject appeal? What's Simoisius to them or they to Simoisius that they should weep for him? Let, however, this feeling for the atmosphere of myth and legend be added, and what charm do the lines take on:

The breath of dew, and twilight's grace,
Be on the lonely battle-place;
And to so young, so kind a face,
The long, protecting grasses cling!
(Alas, alas,
The one inexorable thing!)

In rocky hollows cool and deep,
The bees our boyhood hunted sleep;
The early moon from Ida's steep
Comes to the empty wrestling-ring,
(Alas, alas,
The one inexorable thing!)

Upon the widowed wind recede
No echoes of the shepherd's reed,
And children without laughter lead
The war-horse to the watering.
(Alas, alas,
The one inexorable thing!)

Thou stranger, Ajax Telamon!
What to the loveliest hast thou done,
That ne'er with him a maid may run

Across the marigolds in spring?
(Alas, alas,
The one inexorable thing!)

The world to me has nothing dear
Beyond the namesake river here:
O Simois is wild and clear!
And to his brink my heart I bring;
(Alas, alas,
The one inexorable thing!)

The rhyme scheme in this poem has a distinct fascination to the ear; there is music in the lucid words and in the rhythmic lines, climaxing in each stanza, and, moreover, every stanza is a picture, with a concrete relation to the whole. The poem illustrates several of Miss Guiney's characteristics: first, the compactness of her verse. It is never pirouetting merely to show its grace; in other words, she does not let the unity of the idea escape in a profusion of imagery. She uses figure and symbol with an individual freshness of conception, but always that which is structural with the thought, so that one can rarely detach a stanza or even fugitive lines of her poems without a loss of value. She develops the theme without over-developing it, which is the restraint of the artist. The above poem illustrates, also, the white light which she throws upon her

words when clarity and simplicity are demanded by the form ; whereas, in sonnets, in her dramatic poem, "A Martyr's Idyl," and in other forms of verse, her work is sometimes lacking in that clear, swiftly communicative quality which poetry should possess ; but in her lyric inspirations, where the form and melody condition the diction, one may note the perfect clarity and flexibility which she attains, without loss of the rare and picturesque word-feeling that belongs so inseparably to her.

The stanzas to "Athassal Abbey," the "Foot-note To A Famous Lyric," the delicate "Lilac Song," and many others blend the finer qualities of word and metre. With the exception of the last poem, however, they have not the emotional warmth that imbues several other of her lyrics, as the two "Irish Peasant Songs," which are inspirations of sheer beauty, especially the first, in its subtlety of race-temperament and personal mood, left unanalyzed,—for a further hint would destroy it,—but holding spring and tears and youth in its wistful word and measure :

I knead and I spin, but my life is low the while,
Oh, I long to be alone, and walk abroad a mile,
Yet if I walk alone, and think of naught at all,
Why, from me that's young, should the wild tears fall?

The shower-stricken earth, the earth-colored streams,
They breathe on me awake, and moan to me in dreams,
And yonder ivy fondling the broke castle-wall,
It pulls upon my heart till the wild tears fall.

The cabin door looks down a furze-lighted hill,
And far as Leighlin Cross the fields are green and still ;
But once I hear the blackbird in Leighlin's hedges call,
The foolishness is on me, and the wild tears fall !

It is not surprising that William Black should have quoted this poem in one of his volumes, for it is certainly one of the most exquisite and temperamental of folk-songs. The second is wholly different in note, brimming over with the exuberance of the Celtic imagination, and fresh as the breath of spring which inspires it:

"Tis the time o' the year, if the quicken-bough be staunch,
The green, like a breaker, rolls steady up the branch,
And surges in the spaces, and floods the trunk, and heaves
In little angry spray that is the under-white of leaves ;
And from the thorn in companies the foamy petals fall,
And waves of jolly ivy wink along a windy wall.

"Tis the time o' the year in early light and glad,
The lark has a music to drive a lover mad ;
The downs are dripping nightly, the breathéd damps arise,
Deliciously the freshets cool the grayling's golden eyes,
And lying in a row against the chilly North, the sheep
Inclose a place without a wind for tender lambs to sleep.

The out-of-door atmosphere which Miss Guiney has managed to infuse into these lines is fairly palpable. What sense of moisture in the dew-heavy air is in the second stanza, and what elation and buoyancy of returning life vitalizes the first! While on this phase of her work there is another poem as magnetically charged, and full of ozone, but its objective side incidental to a subjective query which nature and science force to the lips:

The spur is red upon the briar,
The sea-kelp whips the wave ashore ;
The wind shakes out the colored fire
From lamps a-row on the sycamore ;
The tanager with flitting note
Shows to wild heaven his wedding-coat ;
The mink is busy ; herds again
Go hillward in the honeyed rain ;
The midges meet. I cry to Thee
Whose heart
Remembers each of these : Thou art
My God who hast forgotten me.

Bright from the mast, a scarf unwound,
The lined gulls in the offing ride ;
Along an edge of marshy ground,
The shad-bush enters like a bride.
Yon little clouds are washed of care
That climb the blue New England air,
And almost merrily withal
The tree-frog plays at evenfall

His oboe in a mossy tree.
So, too,
Am I not Thine? Arise, undo
This fear Thou hast forgotten me.

From the nature side these lines are pictures, taken each by each they are free-hand strokes with pigment. Note the picturesque quality, for illustration, in the words,

Bright from the mast, a scarf unwound,
The lined gulls in the offing ride,

and their imaginative vision with no hint of the fantastic; for one need only have it glimpsed before him to know that he has seen the same effect a score of times. Miss Guiney comes to the world without, as if no eyes but hers had looked upon it; she brings no other image upon the lens of her vision, and hence the imprint is as newly mirrored, and as fresh with each changing view as a moving reflection upon the surface of the water.

The subjective touch in the above poem:

I cry to Thee,
Whose heart
Remembers each of these : Thou art
My God who hast forgotten me ! —

articulates the cry which life wrings at some time from each of us, noting the infinite solicitude

that writes self-executing laws in the hearts of the creatures, while man goes blundering after intimations and dreams. One comes at times face to face with the necessity to justify the ways of God to man, when he notes throughout nature the unerring certainty of instinct, and the stumbling fallibility of reason. He questions why the bee excels him in wisdom and force and persistence, in shaping conditions for its maintenance, and in intuitions of destiny; or why the infinite exactness that established the goings of the ant in the devious ways of her endeavor should have left man to follow so fatuous a gleam as human intuition in finding his own foot-path among the tortuous ways of life. And these queries Miss Guiney's poem raises, though not with arraignment, rather with the logical demand:

As to a weed, to me but give
Thy sap ! lest aye inoperative
Here in the Pit my strength shall be :
And still,
Help me endure the Pit until
Thou wilt not have forgotten me.

There is sinew and brawn in Miss Guiney's work; she is not dallying in the scented gardens of poesy, but entering the tourney in valorous emprise. Not a man of them who can meet

fate in a braver joust than she, and he must needs look well to his armor if he come off as unscathed. She never stops to bewail the prick of the spear, though it draw blood, but enters the field again for the

“Hope not compassed, and yet not void.”

There is tonic in her work for the craven heart, a note to shame one back to the ranks. Each is a “Recruit” and should take to himself this marching order:

So much to me is imminent :
To leave Revolt that is my tent,
And Failure, chosen for my bride,

And into life's highway be gone
Ere yet Creation marches on,
Obedient, jocund, glorified :

And, last of things afoot, to know
How to be free is still to go
With glad concession, grave accord,

Nor longer, bond and imbecile,
Stand out against the Gradual Will,
The guessed ‘Fall in’ ! of God the Lord.

And the plea of Saint George, awaiting the hour to essay his quest,

O give my youth, my faith, my sword,
Choice of the heart's desire :
A short life in the saddle, Lord !
Not long life by the fire, —

sets one's sluggish blood in responsive motion,—
as do the succeeding lines:

I fear no breathing bowman,
But only, east and west,
The awful other foeman
Impowered in my breast.
The outer fray in the sun shall be,
The inner beneath the moon ;
And may Our Lady lend to me
Sight of the dragon soon.

At the outset of her work Miss Guiney sang an electrifying song of which men begrudged her the glory, being theft of Jove's thunder. It was hight valiantly "The Wild Ride," and has the spirit of all the knights and troopers in Christendom packed within its tense and vibrant lines :

*I hear in my heart, I hear in its ominous pulses,
All day, on the road, the hoofs of invisible horses ;
All night from their stalls, the importunate tramping and
neighing.*

Let cowards and laggards fall back ! but alert to the saddle,
Straight, grim, and abreast, go the weather-worn galloping legion,
With a stirrup-cup each to the lily of women that loves him,

The trail is through dolor and dread, over crags and
morasses ;
There are shapes by the way, there are things that appal
or entice us :
What odds ? we are knights, and our souls are but bent on
the riding.

*I hear in my heart, I hear in its ominous pulses,
All day, on the road, the hoofs of invisible horses ;
All night from their stalls, the importunate tramping and
neighing.*

We spur to a land of no name, outracing the storm-wind ;
We leap to the infinite dark, like the sparks from the anvil,
Thou leadest, O God ! all's well with Thy troopers that
follow !

“ The Kings ” and “ The Perfect Hour ” are other trumpet notes of Miss Guiney’s, illustrating the individuality of her point of view and the personality of her expression.

A poet’s words may be wind-blown feathers, or they may be flint-tipped arrows singing to a mark. The defect with much of present-day poetry is that it is not aimed, it is content to be a pretty flight of feathers, blown by the breath of fancy, and reaching no vital spot.

To test Miss Guiney’s marksmanship with words, one may separate her at once from the class who are flying airy illusions nowhither, for she concentrates, instead of diffusing, and

has, at the outset, a definite point in view. She works upon the arrow principle, but now and again glances from the mark. In such a poem as "The Recruit," in "The Wild Ride," or the "Saint George" quoted from, in her stirring poem "Sanctuary," beginning,

High above Hate I dwell,
O storms ! farewell,

and in many others, she cleaves straight to her aim with no deflection. The same may be said of many of her lighter poems, the charming "Lilac Song," or this delicately wrought love-song, speeding to the heart:

When on the marge of evening the last blue light is broken,
And winds of dreamy odor are loosened from afar ;
Or when my lattice opens, before the lark has spoken,
On dim laburnum-blossoms, and morning's dying star,

I think of thee (O mine the more if other eyes be sleeping !)

Whose great and noonday splendor the many share and see,
While, sacred and forever, some perfect law is keeping
The late and early twilight alone and sweet for me.

In poems of this kind and in deeper ones from the spiritual side of her nature, as well as in those of valor and daring, she uses such words as are tipped with a penetrative point; but in some of her sonnets, such as "The

Chantry," in a narrative poem, such as "The Vigil in Tyrone," though not without pictur-esque quality, in "The Squall," despite its frequently fine imagery, and often in the dramatic poem, "A Martyr's Idyl," the words are too much weighted to carry to the mark; they suggest undue care in selection which interposes between the motive of the poem and the sympathy of the reader. One pauses to consider the words; and the initial impulse, like a spent shell, falls at his feet. Miss Guiney's diction is, in the main, peculiarly crisp and apposite; but she does not always hold to the directness of appeal that distinguishes her truest work, but withdraws herself into subtleties, often beautiful, but too remote. "A Martyr's Idyl" is a dramatically conceived incident, well wrought as to scene and character, and having many passages of great beauty; but the effort to keep the expression to the manner of the time results in a lack of flexibility in the style that is now and then cumbrous. On the whole, it is not in a dramatic poem of this sort that Miss Guiney best reveals herself, but in such inspirations as she has taken —

Neither from sires nor sons,
Nor the delivered ones,
Holy, invoked with awe,

Her best work answers, by practical demonstration, her own query :

“ Where shall I find my light? ”

“ Turn from another’s track,
Whether for gain or lack,
Love but thy natal right.
Cease to follow withal,
Though on thine upled feet
Flakes of the phosphor fall.
Oracles overheard
Are never again for thee,
Nor at a magian’s knee
Under the hemlock tree,
Burns the illumining word.”

The term “original” is one to be used charily and with forethought, but it is one that belongs without danger of challenge to Miss Guiney’s work. There is a distinct quality, both of treatment and conception, that is hers alone, a rare, unfamiliar note, without reminiscent echoes. While it has a certain classic quaintness, it has also vitality and concrete forcefulness.

Her metrical command is varied, and she employs many forms with assurance of touch. She has a group of Alexandrian songs in *A Roadside Harp*, most of them with beauty of measure and atmosphere. Here, in three lines, is a rhythmic achievement:

Me, deep-tresséd meadows, take to your loyal keeping,
Hard by the swish of sickles ever in Aulon sleeping,
Philophron, old and tired, and glad to be done with reap-
ing !

How the "swish of sickles" conveys their very sound! This ability to put into certain words both the music and the picture distinguishes Miss Guiney. In her sonnet upon the "Pre-Reformation Churches about Oxford," even the names that would seem to suggest an inartistic enumeration are made to convey the sense of sabbatical sweetness and calm and to visualize the scene.

The *Sonnets Written at Oxford* mark, as a whole, her finest work in this form, although the twelve London sonnets are full of strong lines and images, and several of them, such as "Doves" and "In The Docks," take swift hold upon one's sympathy. The former flashes a picture at the close, by way of rebuke to the over-solicitous mood, which is not only charming from the artistic side, but opens the eyes in sudden content and gladness.

Ah, if man's boast, and man's advance be vain,
And yonder bells of Bow, loud-echoing home,
And the lone Tree foreknow it, and the Dome,
The monstrous island of the middle main;

If each inheritor must sink again
Under his sires, as falleth where it clomb
Back on the gone wave the disheartened foam —
I crossed Cheapside, and this was in my brain.

What folly lies in forecasts and in fears !
Like a wide laughter sweet and opportune,
Wet from the fount, three hundred doves of Paul's
Shook their warm wings, drizzling the golden noon,
And in their rain-cloud vanished up the walls.
“God keeps,” I said, “our little flock of years.”

This note of spiritual assurance appears throughout Miss Guiney's work, speaking in her sonnet, “The Acknowledgment,” and again and again in other poems. She has the mystic's passion for the One Good, the One Beauty —

O hidden, O perfect, O desired, the first and the final
fair ! —

and gives it impassioned expression in the lines,
“Deo Optimo Maximo,”

All else for use, one only for desire ;
Thanksgiving for the good, but thirst for Thee :
Up from the best, whereof no man need tire,
Impel Thou me.

Delight is menace, if Thou brood not by,
Power a quicksand, Fame a gathering jeer.
Oft as the morn, (though none of earth deny
These three are dear,)

Wash me of them, that I may be renewed,
 Nor wall in clay mine agonies and joys ;
 O close my hand upon Beatitude !
 Not on her toys.

And here at the last is the tenderest Nativity song for which dedicated words were ever found ; so quaint, so gentle, so reverent, so blended of sweet and sad. The second stanza is an artist's grouping from life :

The Ox he openeth wide the doore
 And from the snowe he calls her inne,
 And he hath seen her Smile therefore,
 Our Lady without sinne.
 Now soone from sleepe
 A starre shall leap,
 And soon arrive both King and Hinde ;
Amen, Amen :
 But O, the place co'd I but find !

The Ox hath husht his voyce and bent
 Trewe eyes of Pitty ore the Mow,
 And on his lovelie Neck, forspent,
 The Blessed lays her Browe.
 Around her feet
 Full Warme and Sweete
 His Bowerie Breath doth meeklie dwell ;
Amen, Amen :
 But sore am I with Vaine Travé !

The Ox is Host in Juda's stall,
 And Host of more than onelie one,
 For close she gathereth withal

Our Lorde, her littel Sonne :
Glad Hinde and King
Their Gyfte may bring,
But wo'd to-night my Teares were there ;
Amen, Amen :
Between her Bosom and His hayre !

To sum up Miss Guiney's work, as well as one may, in a sentence,—it has no flaccid thought. There is fibre in all she writes; fibre and nerve. Were the fervor and passion which she throws into her songs of valor to be diffused throughout her verse, making its appeal more intimate and personal, she would speak more widely, but scarcely to more appreciative readers than now delight in her individuality.

V

GEORGE E. SANTAYANA

"**E**MOTION recollected in tranquillity," perfectly defines the work of Mr. George Santayana. He is a musing philosopher environed by himself. He

‘Shuts himself in with his soul
And the shapes come eddying forth,’

shapes that have no being in the world of sense, but are rather phantasms materialized in the ether of dreams. There is no evidence in Mr. Santayana's work that he is living in America in the twentieth century — and upon his own testimony he is not ; he has withdrawn from the importunity of things :

Within my nature's shell I slumber curled,
Unmindful of the changing outer skies, —

and in this inviolate seclusion he enamels the pearl with the nacre of his own spirit.

Mr. Santayana's poet-kinsmen are not to be found in contemporary literature ; he is alone in the midst of the singers as regards tempera-

ment and attitude toward life. His school is that of beauty; his time that of the gods; his faith the sanctity of loveliness; and his creed the restoration of the fair. He would shut out all the obtrusive shows of nature and life, and dwell in the Nirvana of his own contemplation:

A wall, a wall around my garden rear,
And hedge me in from the disconsolate hills ;
Give me but one of all the mountain rills,
Enough of ocean in its voice I hear.
Come no profane insatiate mortal near
With the contagion of his passionate ills ;
The smoke of battle all the valleys fills,
Let the eternal sunlight greet me here.—

and once enshrined in this Nirvanic close, where the strife of living had merged into the poise of being, he would repeople the desolated earth and air with the forms of his imagination:

A thousand beauties that have never been
Haunt me with hope and tempt me to pursue ;
The gods, methink, dwell just behind the blue ;
The satyrs at my coming fled the green.
The flitting shadows of the grove between
The dryads' eyes were winking, and I knew
The wings of sacred Eros as he flew,
And left me to the love of things not seen.
'T is a sad love, like an eternal prayer,
And knows no keen delight, no faint surcease,
Yet from the seasons hath the earth increase,

And heaven shines as if the gods were there.
Had Dian passed, there could no deeper peace
Embalm the purple stretches of the air.

It is no exaggeration to say that were Mr. Santayana in a cloister, or upon a mid-sea island with his books and dreams, he could scarcely be less in touch with the passing world than he is in the midst of the clamor and insistence of modern life, where he keeps the tranquillity of the inner silence as if there were no voices dinning in his ears. He is subjective to the degree of transfusing himself with another's consciousness, and looking upon his own nature from an impersonal standpoint:

There we live o'er, amid angelic powers,
Our lives without remorse, as if not ours,
And others' lives with love, as if our own,—

says one of the sonnets, imaging the passion-stilled world of reflection.

There is a subtlety in Mr. Santayana's processes of thought that demands intuitive divination on the part of the reader; there is so little objectivity to the idea that its essence may almost escape him. His illustrative symbolism is almost never drawn from nature or the world of men and events, but from the treasure of beauty at the depth of his spirit,

where, by some mystic chemistry, he has separated all the elements not in harmony with him. There must at some time have been reaction and repulsion, ferment and explosion, in the laboratory of Mr. Santayana's mind; but he awaited the subsidence of the action; awaited the period when emotion, thought, and learning had distilled and crystallized before he shaped them forth before the world.

This gives to his work a certain fixity both of mood and form; his thoughts are as gems that flash without heat, not the ruby-hearted, passion-dyed gems, but the pale topaz or the amber, holding the imprisoned glow of reflection. If this may seem to limit Mr. Santayana's achievement, it is not so intended, but rather to reveal his distinction. He is not only a true poet, but one of rare accomplishment; his work, however, is for those who are deeply subjective, who trance themselves with the beautiful as an anodyne for pain; those who subordinate to-day to the storied charm of yesterday, and look backward to the twilight of the gods, rather than forward to the renewing sunrise. It is not for those whose creed of poetry is that it should be all things to all men; that life, in travail to deliver truth, should utter its cries through the poet. It is for those

who know that poetry can no more be adapted to all than could the spoken words of a great teacher reach equally the diverse minds of a multitude whom he might address; and that while it may be the office of one poet to interpret the struggles, the activities, the aims of life, it may be equally the part of another to penetrate to that calm at the depth of the soul where throes have brought forth peace. Not only are there various natures to whom poetry speaks, but natures within natures, so that all poets speak to different phases of our consciousness: some to the mind,—and here the range is infinite,—some to the heart, and some to the soul, and of the last is Mr. Santayana. He is for the meditative hours when we are sounding the depths of ourselves and come back to the surface of things, bringing with us the unsatisfied pain of being. Hours when we turn instinctively to a sonnet like this to find our mood expressed:

I would I might forget that I am I,
And break the heavy chain that binds me fast,
Whose links about myself my deeds have cast.
What in the body's tomb doth buried lie
Is boundless; 't is the spirit of the sky,
Lord of the future, guardian of the past,
And soon must forth to know his own at last.
In his large life to live, I fain would die.

Happy the dumb beast, hungering for food,
But calling not his suffering his own ;
Blesséd the angel, gazing on all good,
But knowing not he sits upon a throne ;
Wretched the mortal, pondering his mood,
And doomed to know his aching heart alone.

The much-mooted, but vaguely understood, sub-conscious mind, speaks in this sonnet in terms of the conscious. It is a subtle bit of philosophy, but not more so than several others in the same sequence which show the evolution of Mr. Santayana's attitude toward life. One may not in a brief space follow out the clews to this development, whose beginning was in religious emotion :

My sad youth worshipped at the piteous height
Where God vouchsafed the death of man to share ;
His love made mortal sorrow light to bear,
But his deep wounds put joy to shaméd flight,
And though his arms outstretched upon the tree,
Were beautiful, and pleaded my embrace,
My sins were loth to look upon his face.
So came I down from Golgotha to thee,
Eternal Mother ; let the sun and sea
Heal me, and keep me in thy dwelling-place.

The succeeding sonnet traces the winding of the new way, the reluctance, the

. . . many farewell pious looks behind,
And dumb misgivings where the path might wind,
And questionings of nature, as I went,—

which every life duplicates as it leaves its well-guarded walls of belief and ventures out upon undiscovered ways. The pain of letting go the old, the loneliness of the new, the alien look of all the heights that encompass one, and the psychology of that impulse by which one is both impelled to retrace his way and withheld from it,—are suggested by the sonnet. In the next occurs one of Mr. Santayana's finest lines, the counsel

To trust the soul's invincible surmise.

It would be difficult to define intuition more succinctly than this. It is not, as less subtle poets would have put it, the soul's assurance that one is to trust; this would be to assume, for what assurance have we but that which Mr. Santayana has so subtly termed the "invincible surmise"?

Lines which lead one out into speculative thought are frequent in Mr. Santayana's sonnets. His philosophy is constructive only in so far as it unifies a succession of moods and experiences; but it is pregnant with suggestion

to a psychological mind. One of the sonnets which questions :

Of my two lives, which should I call the dream?
Which action vanity? which vision sight?—

after declaring that

Some greater waking must pronounce aright
and blend the two visions to one seeing,
continues :

Even such a dream I dream, and know full well
My waking passeth like a midnight spell,
But know not if my dreaming breaketh through
Into the deeps of heaven and of hell.
I know but this of all I would I knew :
Truth is a dream, unless my dream is true.

The thought in this passage is elusive, but it is more than a play upon words. It is another way of putting the question, which shall be trusted, which shall become the reality, the objective or the subjective world? One knows that his "waking," his sense perception, is transitory, that it apprehends but the present, which "passeth like a midnight spell," but how far does the other and finer sight penetrate

Into the deeps of heaven and of hell?

No answer from the void to this query, but by the mystical conclusion that

Truth is a dream, unless my dream is true.

In simpler phrase, unless the vision and conviction are to be trusted, unless, to revert to Mr. Santayana's former words, the soul's "invincible surmise" be taken as truth, that which we know as truth is but a phantasm.

The sonnet sequence is the intimate record of an individual soul in its evolving spiritual life, and has the significance belonging only to art which interprets a personality, an experience, in whose development one finds some clew to his own labyrinth. It reveals the many phases of speculation, reflection, questioning, through which one passes in the transition from beliefs indoctrinated in the mind at its earliest consciousness, to convictions which follow thought liberated by life, by intimacy with nature, and by recognition of its own spiritual authority. It is the winning of this conviction, with its attendant seeking and unrest, allayed by draughts from the wayside springs of beauty, memory, and imagination, — which comprises the record of the first sonnet sequence, whose conclusions, as "strewn thoughts" springing along the way, are gathered into a final chaplet for the brows of the "Eternal Mother," Nature, whose peace he sought when he came down from Golgotha, and whose larger meaning, synonymous with

the primal freedom of the soul, is conveyed in the sonnet:

These strown thoughts, by the mountain pathway sprung,
I conned for comfort, till I ceased to grieve,
And with these flowering thorns I dare to weave
The crown, great Mother, on thine altar hung.
Teach thou a larger speech to my loosed tongue,
And to mine opened eyes thy secrets give,
That in thy perfect love I learn to live,
And in thine immortality be young.
The soul is not on earth an alien thing
That hath her life's rich sources otherwhere ;
She is a parcel of the sacred air.
She takes her being from the breath of Spring,
The glance of Phœbus is her fount of light,
And her long sleep a draught of primal night.

Aside from Mr. Santayana's philosophical sonnets he has a second sequence, upon love, which, too, is philosophically tinged. In the matter of beauty this is perhaps the more finished and artistic work; but I have chosen rather to dwell upon the subtlety of his speculations in those phases of thought less universally treated of by poets than is love. It has not been possible, however, to follow the sequence in its order, or to present more than certain individual notes of its philosophy.

Thus far it has been the matter, rather than the manner, of Mr. Santayana's verse that has been considered; but before glancing at the

later sonnet sequence, what of his touch upon the strings of his instrument? One can scarcely have followed the extracts quoted without noting the mellow suavity, the ease, the poise of his work. There is everywhere assurance of expression, nothing tentative, nothing halting. His lines are disposed by the laws of counter-point into well-ordered cadences where nothing jars; his words are rich and mellifluous, in short, he has, as a sonneteer, a finish, a classical command of the vehicle reminiscent of Petrarch and Camoens. The sonnet is, by the nature of the case, a somewhat inadaptable instrument, and yet it is susceptible of great individuality, as one may note by recalling an intricate sonnet by Rossetti and a sweeping, sonorous one by Milton. The criticism which is, perhaps, most apposite to Mr. Santayana's sonnets is that they are "faultily faultless;" they are so finished that one would welcome a false note now and then, that suggested a choke in the voice, or a heart-beat out of time.

There is an atmosphere about all of Mr. Santayana's work that conveys a sense of wandering in the moonlight; it is tempered, softened, stilled; it is like an Isis-veil cast over the eyes; but at times one becomes oppressed with the consciousness of himself, and of the

impalpable visions glimpsed in the wan light, and longs to snatch the veil away and flee to the garish world again. One may seek Mr. Santayana's poetry when his mood demands it, and it will be as a cooling hand in fever; but when the pulse of being is low, and one needs the touch to vitalize, he must turn to others, for Mr. Santayana's work is not charged with the electricity that thrills.

Because he is not inventive in metre nor sufficiently light in touch, Mr. Santayana is not a lyrast. He has scarcely any purely lyrical verse in his collections, and what is contained in them is too lacking in spontaneity to be classed with his best work. It is not wanting in lines of beauty and in English undefiled; but the sense of tone and rhythm, except of the smoothly conventional sort, is absent. There are no innovations in form and the impulse is too subdued for a true lyric. That called "Midnight" has more warmth than the others. Several of his odes in the Sapphic metre have great charm, especially the first. His elegiac verse has often rare elevation of thought; but it, also, has too set a measure, too much of the "formed style" to be vital. It brings well-conceived, well-imaged thought, as in this stanza :

How should the vision stay to guide the hand,
How should the holy thought and ardour stay,
When the false deeps of all the soul are sand,
And the loose rivets of the spirit, clay?

but it rarely shocks one into thinking for himself.

In relation to diction, there are few American writers who use English of such purity and finish as does Mr. Santayana; but it is the scholar's English, the English drawn from familiarity with the great masters and models, and hence lacks the creative flexibility, the quick, warm, ductile adaptability, that a much less accomplished poet may give to his words. It keeps to the accepted canons, the highest, the purest, and uses the consecrated words of literature with an artist's touch; but the racy idiom, the word which some daring poet coined yesterday in an exigent moment — with these it has naught to do.

Mr. Santayana has several dramatic poems, "The Hermit of Carmel," "The Knight's Return," and a dialogue between Hermes and Lucifer, in which the latter relates the details of his banishment from heaven for his daring arraignment and interrogation of God. The dialogue has little dramatic coloring; one hearing it read aloud would have difficulty in de-

termining from the outward change of expression and personality where Lucifer leaves off speaking and Hermes begins, but it puts into the mouth of Lucifer some words full of the challenge of thought, and speaks through both some beautiful fantasies, such as this reply of Lucifer to Hermes' question as to the state of bliss in which the angels dwell :

A doubtful thing

Is blessedness like that. . . .

Their raptured souls, like lilies in a stream
That from their fluid pillow never rise,
Float on the lazy current of a dream.

Mr. Santayana has not written "The Hermit of Carmel" or "The Knight's Return" with a theatrical manager in view. They are stories told in verse, tales of gentle melancholy, pleasant to the ear; but when all is said, one returns to his sonnets as the true expression of his nature and the consummation of his gifts. He is a sonneteer, by every phase of his temperament and every canon of his art. His work in all other forms is cultivated, philosophical, finely finished, but pervaded by an atmosphere of cultured conventionality; whereas in the sonnet he finds a medium whose classic distinction and subtlety are so harmonized to his nature and his characteristic mode of thought, that it becomes to him

the predestined expression. A glance, then, in closing, at the flexile phrases, the psychological analyses of the later sonnet sequence, turning chiefly upon love.

But, first, let me cite from one of the earlier sonnets, an image drawn from this theme, a jewel-like flash of beauty, not to be overlooked. The first line of the metaphor is commonplace; but note the succeeding ones:

Love but the formless and eternal Whole
From whose effulgence one unheeded ray
Breaks on this prism of dissolving clay
Into the flickering colors of thy soul.

This is defining the individual spirit in exquisite terms.

The second sequence teems with beautiful passages, now and again with a note of the *trovatore*, as in the sestett of this sonnet:

Yet why, of one who loved thee not, command
Thy counterfeit, for other men to see,
When God himself did on my heart for me
Thy face, like Christ's upon the napkin, brand?
O how much subtler than a painter's hand
Is love to render back the truth of thee!
My soul should be thy glass in time to be,
And in my thought thine effigy should stand.
Yet, lest the churlish critics of that age
Should flout my praise, and deem a lover's rage

Could gild a virtue and a grace exceed,
I bid thine image here confront my page,
That men may look upon thee as they read,
And cry: "Such eyes a better poet need!"

This has art and charm, but in contrast note the impassioned nobility of utterance which imbues the one that follows. Here are lines of pure emotion and beauty:

We needs must be divided in the tomb,
For I would die among the hills of Spain,
And o'er the treeless, melancholy plain
Await the coming of the final gloom.
But thou — O pitiful! — wilt find scant room
Among thy kindred by the northern main,
And fade into the drifting mist again,
The hemlocks' shadow, or the pines' perfume.
Let gallants lie beside their ladies' dust
In one cold grave, with mortal love inurned;
Let the sea part our ashes, if it must,
The souls fled thence which love immortal burned,
For they were wedded without bond of lust,
And nothing of our heart to earth returned.

Such sonnets as this mark Mr. Santayana as a master of this form, and while his other work has value, it is as a sonneteer that he has made his really individual contribution to literature.

VI

JOSEPHINE PRESTON PEABODY

A BEAUTIFUL and delicate art is that of Miss Josephine Preston Peabody, but somewhat elusive of analysis, so much is its finer part dependent upon the intuition which one brings to it; for Miss Peabody is a poet-mystic, sensitive to impressions from which the grosser part has slipped away,—impressions which come to her clothed upon with a more ethereal vesture than the work-a-day garment of thought,—and while she would fain reveal their hidden import, they often elude her and grow remote in the telling, as if fearful of betraying too openly their secret.

Her first volume, *The Wayfarers*, revealed at the outset a poet's imagination, and a technique so finished that it had already the touch of the artist, but its vision was that of the novice who looks at the morning from beneath her white veil and wonders at the world of sin and strife and passion whose pain has never reached her. It was the work of one who had not yet

met her revealing crisis, not yet been identified to herself, of one reaching out after truth with the filament of fancy until the ductile thread had often been spun too far before it found anchorage. The volume was, in short, an exquisite conjecture as to life, whose baffling, alluring mystery only now and again flashed upon her an unveiled glance of its eyes. This is not, however, to say that the conjecture was vain; indeed, the initial poem, "The Wayfarers," in which, perhaps, it was most definitely embodied, is a thoughtful, suggestive song holding many truths worth pondering, and in phrasing and technique wrought with so much grace that it might stand beside any work of the later volumes. Indeed, this statement is apposite to nearly all the work in the first collection, which in that regard presents an unusual distinction, having from the first on its technical side a maturity that seemed not to belong to the tentative work of a young poet; it was, however, over-ornate, lacking directness and simplicity, and inclining to excess of elaboration in theme, so that one often became entangled in the weft of poetic artifice and lost the clew of thought. Take as a random illustration the following stanzas from the poem entitled "The Weavers," under which Miss Peabody symbolizes the elu-

sive hopes and fancies that come by night,
weaving their weft of dreams :

Lo, a gray pallor on the loom
Waxeth apace,—a glamourie
Like dawn outlooking, pale to see
Before the sun hath burst to bloom ;
Wan beauty, growing out of gloom,
With promise of fair things to be.

.
The shuttle singeth. And fair things
Upon the web do come and go ;
Dim traceries like clouds ablow
Fade into cobweb glimmerings,
A silver, fretted with small wings, —
The while a voice is singing low.

Of the eight remaining stanzas several are equally lacking in anything that may be grasped, and while there is a certain art in imaging the elusive fancies which the weavers bring, there should be some more definite fancy or ideal to embody, rather than the mere intent to make beautiful lines. This is, perhaps, an extreme instance of the over-elaboration of the first volume, though it distinguishes the long poem which gives its name to the collection, and appears in many of the lyrics.

Miss Peabody is an inventive metrist, and her sense of rhythm is highly developed, or



rather it is innately correct, being manifest with equal grace in the first collection; witness the music of these stanzas from "Spinning in April":

Moon in heaven's garden, among the clouds that wander,
Crescent moon so young to see, above the April ways,
Whiten, bloom not yet, not yet, within the twilight yonder;
All my spinning is not done, for all the loitering days.

Oh, my heart has two wild wings that ever would be flying!
Oh, my heart's a meadow-lark that ever would be free!
Well it is that I must spin until the light be dying;
Well it is the little wheel must turn all day for me!

All the hill-tops beckon, and beyond the western meadows
Something calls me ever, calls me ever, low and clear:
A little tree as young as I, the coming summer shadows,—
The voice of running waters that I ever thirst to hear.

Oftentime the plea of it has set my wings a-beating;
Oftentime it coaxes, as I sit in weary wise,
Till the wild life hastens out to wild things all entreating,
And leaves me at the spinning-wheel, with dark, unseeing eyes.

The poem has several other stanzas equally charming, but which detract from the artistic structure of the song by over-spinning the thought.

Among the simple, sincere lyrics which prevail more by their feeling than mechanism, are "One That Followed," "Horizon," "Dew-

Fall," "Befriended," "The Song of A Shepherd-Boy at Bethlehem," and the two stanzas called, "After Music," whose intimate beauty renders them personally interpretative.

I saw not they were strange, the ways I roam,
 Until the music called, and called me thence,
 And tears stirred in my heart as tears may come
 To lonely children straying far from home,
 Who know not how they wandered so, nor whence.

If I might follow far and far away
 Unto the country where these songs abide,
 I think my soul would wake and find it day,
 Would tell me who I am, and why I stray,—
 Would tell me who I was before I died.

There is a mystical touch here in note with the opening reference to the subtlety of Miss Peabody's sources of inspiration.

In the first volume is also a sonnet from the heart and to the heart, for who has not known the weariness that comes of long striving to image, or interpret the beautiful, and yet is loth to commit his unfulfilled dream to the oblivion of sleep. The sonnet is called, "To the Unsung."

Stay by me, Loveliness ; for I must sleep.
 Not even desire can lift such wearied eyes ;
 The day was heavy and the sun will rise
 On day as heavy, weariness as deep.

Be near, though you be silent. Let me steep
A sad heart in that peace, as a child tries
To hold his comfort fast, in fingers wise
With imprint of a joy that's yet to reap.
Leave me that little light; for sleep I must,
— And put off blessing to a doubtful day —
Too dull to listen or to understand.
But only let me close the eyes of trust
On you unchanged. Ah, do not go away,
Nor let a dream come near, to loose my hand.

Altogether, Miss Peabody's first book of verse revealed strength, feeling, and imagination, though tentative in its philosophy, as the initial work of a young poet must necessarily be, and having but a slight rooting in life.

The second volume, *Fortune and Men's Eyes*, opens with a cleverly written one-act play, turning upon an adventure of two maids of honor at Elizabeth's court, with Master W. S., a player, whose identity is not far to seek, and William Herbert, son of the Earl of Pembroke, the scene being laid at the tavern of the Bear and the Angel, whither Mistress Anne Hughes and Mary Fyton have resorted on a merry escapade under cover of seeing the people celebrate the fête of the Bear.

The atmosphere of the time is well reproduced, the dialogue of the tapsters cleverly

done, and the final scene between the Player and Mary is full of dramatic intensity.

In her second volume, Miss Peabody has also a dramatic monologue called, "The Wingless Joy," which, though now and again Browningesque in tone, has many felicitous images and shows a true insight into human motive.

The lyrics in the second volume form a less important part of the collection, though there are several, such as "The Source," "The Survivor," "Psyche in the Niche," and "In the Silence," which rank with Miss Peabody's best work, particularly the last, illustrating the truth that the Spirit manifests at the need, even the dumb and undivining need, and not alone at the call:

Where did'st Thou tarry, Lord, Lord,
Who heeded not my prayer?
All the long day, all the long night,
I stretched my hands to air.

"There was a bitterer want than thine
Came from the frozen North ;
Laid hands upon my garment's hem
And led me forth.

"It was a lonely Northern man,
Where there was never tree
To shed its comfort on his heart,
There he had need of me.

“ He kindled us a little flame
To hope against the storm ;
And unto him, and unto me,
The light was warm.”

And yet I called Thee, Lord, Lord —
Who answered not, nor came :
All the long day, and yesterday,
I called Thee by Thy name.

“ There was a dumb, unhearing grief
Spake louder than Thy word,
There was a heart called not on me,
But yet I heard.

“ The sorrow of a savage man
Shaping him gods, alone,
Who found no love in the shapen clay
To answer to his own.

“ His heart knew what his eyes saw not ;
He bade me stay and eat ;
And unto him, and unto me,
The cup was sweet.

“ Too long we wait for thee and thine,
In sodden ways and dim,
And where the man’s need cries on me
There have I need of him.

“ Along the borders of despair
Where sparrows seek no nest,
Nor ravens food, I sit at meat, —
The Unnamed Guest.”

Before leaving the second volume there is one other poem of which I cannot refrain from quoting a part, to show the subtlety with which a phase of the psychology of sentiment has been grasped and analyzed in these lines called "The Knot":

Oh, I hated me,
 That when I loved you not, yet I could feel
 Some charm in me the deeper for your love :
 Some singing-robe invisible — and spun
 Of your own worship — fold me silvery
 In very moonlight, so that I walked fair
 When you were by, who had no wish to be
 The fairer for your eyes ! But at some cost
 Of other life the hyacinth grows blue,
 And sweetens ever. . . . So it is with us,
 The sadder race. I would have fled from you,
 And yet I felt some fibre in myself
 Binding me here, to search one moment yet —
 The only well that gave me back a star, —
 Your eyes reflecting. And I grew aware
 How worship that must ever spend and burn
 Will have its deity from gold or stone ;
 Till that fain womanhood that would be fair
 And lovable, — the hunger of the plant —
 Against my soul's commandment reached and took
 The proffered fruit, more potent day by day.

And the lines which follow close with the wholly feminine query,

Will you not go? — and yet, why will you go?

It is a human bit of dramatic analysis, and reduces inconsistent femininity to a common denominator.

In her third volume, *Marlowe*, a drama, founded upon the life of the lovable but erratic poet and playwright, Miss Peabody essayed an ambitious undertaking, but one which, as literature, carries its full justification. As drama, one must qualify. In characterization, aside from Marlowe himself, who comes before one vividly, there is a lack of sharp definition. Nashe, Lodge, Peele, and Green, Marlowe's fellow playwrights and friends, might, from the evidence of the dialogue, be the same character under different names, so alike are they in speech and temperament. Next to Marlowe himself, Bame, who through jealousy becomes his enemy, and brings on the final tragedy, is the most individually drawn. Of the women characters, the drama presents practically but one,—Alison, the little country maid who loves Marlowe secretly, and becomes in a way his good angel,—as "Her Ladyship" of the Court, object of his adoration, is introduced but twice in the play, and that veiled, so that only for a moment at the last may one see the beauty that—under guise of Helen—inspired Marlowe's lines;

Was this the face that launched a thousand ships
And burned the topless towers of Ilium !

While the two brief comings of "Her Ladyship" impart an artistic touch of mystery, it is to be doubted if in a play so intangible a heroine could become a vital factor, and if she were not, the woman element of the drama must be sustained wholly by Alison, the little "Quietude," who, until the one beautiful scene with Marlowe after her marriage, remains an artless undeveloped child, with too little color, too weak a human pulse-beat, to compel interest and sympathy. She is delicately drawn, in her unsophisticated sweetness and purity, and the inner strength of her nature is finely shown at the last, but up to this period of revelation one does not feel her; she lacks the touch of life essential to a character in drama.

In plot the work presents somewhat the same limitation. It is, until the two final scenes, after Marlowe's downfall, literature without action: nothing happens in the earlier part of the play to create an element of suspense fore-looking to the developments at the close. Marlowe's triumphs are detailed to one another by his friends, but they are not *shown* in some great scene where he might receive the acclamations of the people and so contrast sharply

with his downfall at the end: story suffices for action. The sentiment of the play presents also no intricacies: Alison, although loving Marlowe, is not for a moment a factor of love in his life, since he neither suspects her attachment nor reciprocates it, and hence the jealousy of her suitors has no effect either upon him or upon the supposed audience. "Her Ladyship" is not pitted against Alison, since the latter knows that Marlowe's heart is given to his veiled divinity; hence there are no complexities arising from the love-element. For the purpose of acting, therefore, the play seems to me to lack movement, suspense, variety of characterization, and, except in the drawing of Marlowe, definiteness of type. It has, however, a strong and vivid scene at the close, leading up to and including Marlowe's tragic death, and a scene of rare beauty and of intense dramatic reality, of which I shall speak later, in the visit of Marlowe to Alison after his downfall.

On the side of literature, the drama contains work of admirable strength and quality, work that in its beauty of phrase and subtlety of penetration is not unworthy to be put into the mouth of Marlowe of the "mighty line." Miss Peabody never falls into the Shakespearizing

strain which many writing of that epoch assume; her dialogue is vivid, direct, and full of original imagery, as when Marlowe speaks of Alison as having for him —

Snowflake pity,
Destined to melt and lose itself in fire
Or ever it can cool my tongue,

and thus describes her:

Why, she was a maid
Of crystalline ! If you looked near enough,
You 'd see the wonder changing in her eyes
Like parti-colored marvels in a brook,
Bright through the clearness !

Note now in contrast the impassioned words in which he pictures his divinity :

Hers is the Beauty that hath moved the world
Since the first woman. Beauty cannot die.
No worm may spoil it. Unto earth it goes,
There to be cherished by the cautious spring,
Close folded in a rose, until the time
Some new imperial spirit comes to earth
Demanding a fair raiment ; and the earth
Yields up her robes of vermeil and of snow,
Violet-veinéd — beautiful as wings,
And so the Woman comes !

And this beautiful passage addressed to her after the triumph of " Faustus ":

Drink my song.

Grow fair, you sovran flower, with earth and air ;
Sip from the last year's leaves their memories
Of April, May, and June, their summer joy,
Their lure for every nightingale, their longing.

And finally these words spoken to her in splendid scorn, after his downfall and her rejection :

I took you for a Woman, thing of dust, —
I — I who showed you first what you might be !
But see now, you were hollow all the time,
A piece of magic. Now the air blows in,
And you are gone in ashes.

At once the most beautiful and artistically drawn scene is that previously referred to, in which Marlowe, his star in eclipse, visits Alison after her marriage. Here is a dramatic situation, human and vital, and Miss Peabody has developed it with rare feeling and skill. The picture of Marlowe in his disgrace and despondency, coming to the woman who had believed in him, and whose love had shone upon his unseeing eyes, is drawn with fine delicacy and pathos. In the flash of revelation that comes to him from her white spirit, he speaks these words :

Thou hast heard
Of Light that shined in darkness, hast thou not?
And darkness comprehended not the Light?

So. But I tell thee why. It was because
 The Dark, a sleeping brute, was blinded first,
 Bewildered at a thing it did not know.

Have pity on the Dark, I tell you, Bride.
 For after all is said, there is no thing
 So hails the Light as that same blackness there,
 O'er which it shines the whiter. Do you think
 It will not know at last? — it will not know?

Those, too, are noble passages, though too long to quote, in which Marlowe unburdens his overcharged heart to Alison, and intrusts to her faith the keeping of that higher self she had divined in him; and when Marlowe, early in the scene, referring to his misfortunes, says:

You do not know
 The sense of waking down among the dead,
 Hard by some lazarus-house,—

note the hidden meaning in Alison's reply:

Nay; but I know
 The sense of death. And then to rise again
 And feel thyself bewildered, like a spirit
 Out of the grave-clothes and the fragment strewings.

Passages of subtle significance, wistful, tender, and pathetic, distinguish this scene.

Miss Peabody has visualized Marlowe clearly wherever he appears, and created him as the lovable, impulsive, generous-spirited, but ill-

starred genius that he was. It is a life-study, in its conflicts, its overthrown ideals, its appealing humanity, and should take its place as one of the permanent interpretations of his character.

Many of her critics have found in Miss Peabody's latest volume, *The Singing Leaves*, an inspiration and charm exceeding that of her former work, and in delicacy, lyrical ease, simplicity, and ideality it must be accounted one of her truest achievements; but there is about the volume an impalpability, an airy insubstantiality, which renders it elusive and unconvincing. The mystical subtlety hitherto noted in Miss Peabody's work has, in the latest volume, grown, until many of the poems have so little objectivity that they float as iris-tinted flecks of foam upon the deep of thought. They have beauty of spirit, beauty of word; but their motive is so subtle, their thought so intangible, that while they charm one in the reading, they have, with a few exceptions, melted into vapor, gone the way of the foam, when once the eye has left them. One feels throughout the volume an ingenuous simplicity, a *naïveté*, that is, in many of her poems, exceedingly charming, but which, becoming the pervasive note of the collection, communicates to it a certain artificial

artlessness, as if June, disregarding the largess of the rose, yearned back to April and the violet; in short, the poems seem to me, with a few exceptions, to lack moving, vital impulse, and to bring few warmly imbued words from life. They are as the pale moon-flower, growing in the stillness of dreams, rather than the rose dyed with the blood of the heart.

But what is, to me, the limitation of the volume,—its over-subtilized mood and lack of definite, moving purpose,—must, to many of its readers, be granted to be its distinction; and for their very impalpability these delicate Leaves, that vibrate with impulse as ethereal as that which moves the aspen when the wind is still, have for many the greater charm.

To glance, then, at some of the finer achievements of the volume, one finds among the lyrics several turning upon love that catch in artistic words an undefined mood, such as “Forethought” and “Unsaid,” or in captivating picture-phrase, a blither fancy, such as “The Enchanted Sheepfold,” or, stronger and finer than these, that vision of love called “The Cloud,” which enfolds truth and wraps the heart in its whiteness. One can scarcely fancy a more exquisite bit of imagery in which to clothe the thought of these lines:

The islands called me far away,
The valleys called me home.
The rivers with a silver voice
Drew on my heart to come.

The paths reached tendrils to my hair
From every vine and tree.
There was no refuge anywhere
Until I came to thee.

There is a northern cloud I know,
Along a mountain crest.
And as she folds her wings of mist,
So I could make my rest.

There is no chain to bind her so
Unto that purple height ;
And she will shine and wander, slow,
Slow, with a cloud's delight.

Would she begone ? She melts away,
A heavenly joyous thing.
Yet day will find the mountain white,
White-folded with her wing.

• • • •
And though love cannot bind me, Love,
— Ah no ! — yet I could stay
Maybe, with wings forever spread,
— Forever, and a day.

Here is delicacy enshrining one of the deeper truths of life.

Many of the lyrics have a seventeenth-century lilt, but not of imitation. There are no echoes in Miss Peabody's song, its note, measure,

and spirit are entirely her own, and a random stanza would carry its identification, so individual is her touch. Of the seventeenth-century mood, however, are "The Song Outside," "Forethought," "The Top of the Morning," "The Blind One," and other poems.

Nearly all the lyrics in *The Singing Leaves* are very brief, showing, in their compactness and restrained use of imagery, just the opposite method from that prevailing in Miss Peabody's first book, *The Wayfarers*. So marked is the contrast that, but for the personality imbuing them, they might have been written by another hand. Whereas the diction also in the earlier work inclined to beauty for its own sake, the reaction to its present simplicity is the more marked. It is doubtless for this reason that many of the poems carry with them a note of conscious ingenuousness, as if their simplest effects had been deliberately achieved. Not so, however, such poems as "The Inn," "The Drudge," "Sins," "The Anointed," "The Walk," whose words are quick with native impulse, as the trenchant lines of the third :

A lie, it may be black or white ;
I care not for the lie :
My grief is for the tortured breath
Of Truth that cannot die.

And cruelty, what that may be,
 What creature understands?
 But O, the glazing eyes of Love,
 Stabbed through the open hands !

Two poems contained in *The Singing Leaves* are of a note far more serious and vital than that of their fellows : the first, "The Ravens;" the second, and to my thinking, the more important, "The Fool," which from the stand-point of strength, feeling, forceful expression, idealism, and the portrayal of human nature, seems to me the achievement of the book. It holds a truth bitten in with the acid of experience :

O what a Fool am I ! — Again, again,
 To give for asking: yet again to trust
 The needy love in women and in men,
 Until again my faith is turned to dust
 By one more thrust.

How you must smile apart who make my hands
 Ever to bleed where they were reached to bless ;
 — Wonder how any wit that understands
 Should ever try too near, with gentle stress,
 Your sullenness !

Laugh, stare, deny. Because I shall be true, —
 The only triumph slain by no surprise :
 True, true, to that forlornest truth in you,
 The wan, beleaguered thing behind your eyes,
 Starving on lies.

Build by my faith ; I am a steadfast tool :
When I am dark, begone into the sun.
I cry, ‘Ah, Lord, how good to be a Fool :—
A lonely game indeed, but now all done ;
— And I have won !’

Here speaks a word from life worth a score of “Charms: To Be Said In The Sun,” or other fanciful unreality; and because of such poems as this, fibred in human motive, one feels by contrast in many of the others that Miss Peabody has been playing with her genius, casting “Charms” and “Spells,” which are mere poetic sorcery.

Miss Peabody has a rare sympathy with child-life, and her group of poems of this nature could not well be bettered. With the exception of a line now and then which may be a bit beyond the expression of a child, they are fidelity itself to the moods that swayed *The Little Past*. “Journey,” “The Busy Child,” and “The Mystic” are among the best, though none could be spared, unless, perhaps, “Cakes and Ale.” Still another with the true child-feeling is that called “Late,” — a tender little song which, because of its brevity, must suffice to represent the group :

My father brought somebody up,
To show us all asleep.

They came as softly up the stairs
As you could creep.

They whispered in the doorway there
And looked at us awhile,
I had my eyes shut up, but I
Could feel him smile.

I shut my eyes up close, and lay
As still as I could keep ;
Because I knew he wanted us
To be asleep.

Miss Peabody's work, considered in its entirety, is distinguished by an art of rare grace and delicacy, by imagination and vision, susceptibility to the finer impressions, and by an ever-present ideality ; and while it lacks somewhat the element of personal emotion and passion, it has a sympathy subtle and spiritual, if less intimate in its revealing.

VII

CHARLES G. D. ROBERTS

MR. CHARLES G. D. ROBERTS presents so marked an example of evolution in the style of his work and the sources of his inspiration, that he has from volume to volume, like the nautilus, "changed his last year's dwelling for the new," and having entered the "more stately mansion" has "known the old no more."

The first chamber which he fashioned for himself in the House of Art could not long contain him, as its walls were built of myths and traditions, incapable of further expansion. This was the period of *Orion and Other Poems*, such as "Ariadne," "Memnon," and "Launce-lot And The Four Queens," work done prior to 1880 and creditable to the initial effort of a young collegian.

The second lodging was scarcely more permanent; though structured less in myth, and showing a gain in workmanship, it was still too narrow a dwelling for an expanding spirit, and did little more than give foretokens

of that which should succeed it. The volume contained, however, one admirable composition, one that remains as vital and apposite as when it was written, — the stirring stanzas to Canada. Indeed, the fine courage, the higher loyalty that distinguishes this appeal, lifts it from the mere grandiloquent utterance of a young man with over-hasty convictions, to a noble arraignment, and leads one to wonder why other poets of her domain do not turn their pens to revealing her to herself as does this fine utterance.

Mr. Roberts' third volume, *Songs of the Common Day*, bore almost no relation to its predecessors, and might have been the work of a different hand, as regards both subject and style. Legend and myth had wholly disappeared, and experience had begun to furnish the raw material, the flax, for the poet's spindle and distaff which earlier effort had been making ready. Not yet, however, had the work the virility and tang that smack in the very first line of its successor, *The Book of the Native*. It was graceful, artistic singing, but lacking, except in a few instances, the large free note that sounds in the later work. Among its lyrics is one of exquisite tenderness, as sad and sweet as Tennyson's "Break, break, break," and

in the sifting of the volume, this remains, perhaps, the sand of gold :

Grey rocks and greyer sea,
And surf along the shore —
And in my heart a name
My lips shall speak no more.

The high and lonely hills
Endure the darkening year —
And in my heart endure
A memory and a tear.

Across the tide a sail
That tosses and is gone —
And in my heart the kiss
That longing dreams upon.

Grey rocks and greyer sea,
And surf along the shore —
And in my heart the face
That I shall see no more.

The simplicity and pathos of this lyric render it unforgettable.

“The Tide on Tantramar,” from the third volume, a ballad of the sea and the salt marshes, transfers to the page the keen pungence of the brine, as do the descriptive stanzas of Tantramar used illustratively in the “Ave” to Shelley. There is noble work in this elegy, and while it wanders over a good deal of Canadian territory, making inspired observations of nature



before it discloses their relation to the subject — when the comparison is reached it is opposite, and the poem shows an insight into the character of Shelley that is gratifying, in view of the vagueness usually associated with his name.

Other *Songs of the Common Day*, forelooking to the later poet, are "The Silver Thaw," "Canadian Streams," and "The Wood Frolic," having the first-hand, magnetic touch distinguishing every line of Mr. Roberts' out-of-door verse in that volume which first truly reveals him, — *The Book of the Native*. So conscious is one of a new force in this book that it would seem to represent another personality. Its opening poem, "Kinship," turns for inspiration,

Back to the bewildering vision
And the border-land of birth ;
Back into the looming wonder,
The Companionship of Earth,

and puts the query to nature :

Tell me how some sightless impulse,
Working out a hidden plan,
God for kin and clay for fellow,
Wakes to find itself a man.

Tell me how the life of mortal,
Wavering from breath to breath,
Like a web of scarlet pattern
Hurtles from the loom of death.

How the caged bright bird, Desire,
Which the hands of God deliver,
Beats aloft to drop unheeded
At the confines of forever.

Faints unheeded for a season,
Then outwings the farthest star,
To the wisdom and the stillness
Where thy consummations are.

This sounds the keynote to *The Book of the Native*, which is equally concerned with the enigmas of the soul and the mysteries of nature. The questing spirit is abroad in it; the unquenched faith, the vitality, the hidden import of life is in it; and while its metaphysics do not go to the point of developing a definite philosophy, they set one to thinking for himself, which is a better service. "Origins," a speculation as to our coming from "the enigmatic Will," and the "Unsleeping," a vision of the Force brooding over life,—are among the strongest poems of this motive. To cite the second:

I soothe to unimagined sleep
The sunless bases of the deep,
And then I stir the aching tide
That gropes in its reluctant side.

I heave aloft the smoking hill :
To silent peace its throes I still.
But ever at its heart of fire
I lurk, an unassuaged desire.

I wrap me in the sightless germ
An instant or an endless term ;
And still its atoms are my care,
Dispersed in ashes or in air.

I hush the comets one by one
To sleep for ages in the sun ;
The sun resumes before my face
His circuit of the shores of space.

The mount, the star, the germ, the deep,
They all shall wake, they all shall sleep.
Time, like a flurry of wild rain,
Shall drift across the darkened pane.

Space, in the dim predestined hour,
Shall crumble like a ruined tower.
I only, with unfaltering eye,
Shall watch the dreams of God go by.

What a fine touch in the lines declaring that

Time, like a flurry of wild rain,
Shall drift across the darkened pane !

Mr. Roberts has the rare pictorial gift of flashing a scene before one without employing an excess of imagery, and never that which is confused or cumbrous. His style is nervous, magnetic, direct, and has, in his later work, very little superfluous tissue. This statement, has, of course, its exceptions, but is sufficiently accurate to be made a generalization, and in no case is it better shown than in the

descriptive poems of the Canadian country in *The Book of the Native*. What is there about Canada that sets the blood of her poets a-tingle and lends magic to their fingers when writing of her? What is there in Grand Pré's "barren reaches by the tide," or in the marshes of Tantramar, that such a spell should wait upon them, calling the roamer

"Back into the looming wonder,
The Companionship of Earth"?

With the American poets of the present day, despite their feeling for nature, it is rather her beauty in the abstract than any particular locality with which they chance to be associated, that inspires them,—though Mr. Cawein, in his allegiance to Kentucky, furnishes a marked exception to this statement,—but the Canadian poets, with a passion like that of a lover, sing of the haunts that knew their first devotion: now with a buoyant infectious note, now with a reminiscent sadness; in short, the Canadian poets seem to have a sympathetic identity with their country, an interchange of personality by which they reciprocally express each other.

Particularly is this true of Bliss Carman, Duncan Campbell Scott, and Charles G. D.

Roberts; and it was equally true of Archibald Lampman, whose untimely passing lost to Canada one of her anointed singers, to whose high promise justice has hardly yet been done. To illustrate Mr. Roberts' nature-sympathy, and susceptibility to the mood of the year, let me put in contrast parts of two poems from *The Book of the Native*. The first belongs to the racy note pervading a good deal of the nature-verse of to-day, of which the Vagabondia books set the fashion: it is called "Afoot," but might with equal aptness be named the "Processional," since the second is the "Recessional":

Comes the lure of green things growing,
Comes the call of waters flowing,—
And the wayfarer desire
Moves and wakes and would be going.

Hark the migrant hosts of June
Marching nearer noon by noon !
Hark the gossip of the grasses
Bivouacked beneath the moon !

Hark the leaves their mirth averring ;
Hark the buds to blossom stirring ;
Hark the hushed, exultant haste
Of the wind and world conferring !

Hark the sharp, insistent cry
Where the hawk patrols the sky !
Hark the flapping, as of banners,
Where the heron triumphs by !

Note the picturesque phrase and the compulsive, quickstep note in the lines above, as of the advancing cohorts of spring, and in contrast the slow movement, the sadness of the retreating year, in these beautiful "Recessional" stanzas :

Now along the solemn heights
 Fade the Autumn's altar-lights ;
 Down the great earth's glimmering chancel
 Glide the days and nights.

Little kindred of the grass,
 Like a shadow on a glass
 Falls the dark and falls the stillness ;
 We must rise and pass.

We must rise and follow, wending
 Where the nights and days have ending, —
 Pass in order pale and slow,
 Unto sleep extending.

Little brothers of the clod,
 Soul of fire and seed of sod,
 We must fare into the silence
 At the knees of God.

Little comrades of the sky,
 Wing to wing we wander by,
 Going, going, going, going,
 Softly as a sigh.

And to make the season-cycle complete, and also to show the delicacy of imagination with

which Mr. Roberts invests every changing aspect of his well-loved outer world, here are two stanzas on "The Frosted Pane":

One night came Winter noiselessly, and leaned
Against my window-pane.
In the deep stillness of his heart convened
The ghosts of all his slain.

.....

Leaves, and ephemera, and stars of earth,
And fugitives of grass,—
White spirits loosed from bonds of mortal birth,
He drew them on the glass.

Fancies as exquisite as this bespeak the true poet. "The Trout Brook" and "The Solitary Woodsman" are other inspirations as individual.

Mr. Roberts' fifth volume, *New York Nocturnes*, as its name implies, was a decided departure from his former work, showing his versatility, but what is more to the purpose, his recognition of the dramatic element, the human, vital poetry in the babel of the streets. One could wish that the *Nocturnes* penetrated more profoundly into the varied phases of life in the great seething city, that, in short, they sounded other deeps than those of love; but Mr. Roberts has succeeded in conveying that sense of isolation in a throng, that heavy loneliness and reaction, throwing one back upon

his own spiritual personality, which belongs to the bewildering city night, and from which the finer companionships of love arise as a refuge and need.

The *Nocturnes* have the city's over-soul incarnate in them; for in the last analysis, the commerce, the art, the ambition, the strife, the defeat, that one may term the city's life, are but as hands and feet to minister to the spirit of love. The first of the *Nocturnes* suggests this :

I walk the city square with thee,
The night is loud ; the pavements roar ·
Their eddying mirth and misery
Encircle thee and me.

The street is full of lights and cries :
The crowd but brings thee close to me,
I only hear thy low replies ;
I only see thine eyes.

The "Nocturne of Consecration" is impasioned and full of spirituality ; it is, however, too long to quote, which is unfortunately the case with the "Nocturne of the Honeysuckle," another of the finer poems. "At the Station" is instinct with movement, reproducing the picture of the swiftly changing throngs, and conveying the eager expectancy of the hour of meeting. The *Nocturnes* have also a group of mis-

cellaneous poems, and the volume as a whole, while less virile than *The Book of the Native*, owing to the difference in theme, is distinguished by refinement of feeling and artistry.

In *The Book of the Rose* Mr. Roberts has done some excellent work, and some, alas, that strikes a decided note of artificiality. The least real and convincing of the poems is that called "On the Upper Deck," which opens the volume. The first stanza is subtly phrased, and also the lyric which occurs midway of the poem; but the dialogue between the lovers is honeyed poetizing rather than genuine emotion. I find few heart-throbs in it, but rather a melodramatic sentimentality from whose flights one is now and again let down to the common day with summary despatch, as in the parenthetical clause of the stanza which follows:

Let us not talk of roses. Don't you think
The engine's pulse throbs louder now the light
Has gone? The hiss of waters past our hull
Is more mysterious, with a menace in it?
And that pale streak above the unseen land,
How ominous! a sword has just such pallor!
(Yes, you may put the scarf around my shoulders.)
Never has life shown me the face of beauty
But near it I have seen the face of fear.

It may be that an obtuse man upon the deck of a steamer would interrupt his sweetheart's

flight of poesy to envelop her in a shawl, but the details of the matter may well be left to the imagination. It is doubtless one of those passages which seem to a writer to give reality to a picture, but afterward smile at him sardonically from the printed page. Mr. Roberts inclines elsewhere in the same poem to be too explicit; after a most exalted declaration, he says:

No, do not move ! Alone although we be
I dare not touch your hand ; your gown's dear hem
I will not touch lest I should break my dream
And just an empty deck-chair mock my longing.

Here again it was scarcely necessary to qualify the chair, and indeed the whole passage savors of melodrama. These are, however, only such lines as show that to the one relating a matter the least incident may appear to lend reality to the setting, whereas to the reader the detail may violate taste.

The opening stanza, mentioned as one of the truly subtle bits of the poem in question, has these fine lines :

As the will of last year's wind,
As the drift of the morrow's rain,
As the goal of the falling star,
As the treason sinned in vain,

As the bow that shines and is gone,
As the night cry heard no more,—
Is the way of the woman's meaning
Beyond man's eldest lore.

This stanza and the lyric below, which is sung as an interlude to the dialogue, go far toward redeeming the over-ripe sentiment of the poem:

O Rose, blossom of mystery, holding within your deeps
The hurt of a thousand vigils, the heal of a thousand
sleeps,
There breathes upon your petals a power from the ends of
the earth,
Your beauty is heavy with knowledge of life and death and
birth.

O Rose, blossom of longing — the faint suspense, and the
fire,
The wistfulness of time, and the unassuaged desire,
The pity of tears on the pillow, the pang of tears unshed, —
With these your spirit is weary, with these your beauty is
fed.

The remaining poems of the volume are much more artistic than the first, with the exception of the passages last quoted. "The Rose of Life" is artistically wrought as to form and metre, and subtle in analysis; but, because of its length and that it voices somewhat the same thought as the lyric above, the former must serve to show with what delicacy

of interpretation he approaches a theme so well worn, but ever new, as that of the rose. It is chiefly on the symbolistic side that Mr. Roberts considers the subject; and while one may feel that the sentiment cloys at times when a group of poems using the rose as an image are bracketed together, this is the chief criticism of the volume, as the lyrics following the opening poem, "On the Upper Deck," have both charm and art, and one hesitates between such an one as, "O Little Rose, O Dark Rose," and the one immediately following it, "The Rose of My Desire." This, perhaps, has a more compelling mood, though no greater charm of touch than the other:

O wild, dark flower of woman,
Deep rose of my desire,
An Eastern wizard made you
Of earth and stars and fire.

When the orange moon swung low
Over the camphor-trees,
By the silver shaft of the fountain
He wrought his mysteries.

The hot, sweet mould of the garden
He took from a secret place
To become your glimmering body
And the lure of your strange face.

From the swoon of the tropic heaven
He drew down star on star,
And breathed them into your soul
That your soul might wander far —

On earth forever homeless,
But intimate of the spheres,
A pang in your mystic laughter,
A portent in your tears.

From the night's heat, hushed, electric,
He summoned a shifting flame,
And cherished it, and blew on it
Till it burned into your name.

And he set the name in my heart
For an unextinguished fire,
O wild, dark flower of woman,
Deep rose of my desire !

Metrically the poem jars in the line,
And breathed them into your soul,

departing as it does from the general scheme of the third lines, and rendering it necessary to make "soul" bisyllabic in order to carry the metre smoothly, and in accord with its companion verses. "Spirit" would have fitted the metrical exigency better, leaving the final unaccented syllable as in the majority of the lines, but would not have lent itself to repetition in the succeeding line as does "soul," — so

"who shall arbitrate"? Mr. Roberts rarely offends the ear in his metres, but instead his cadences are notably true.

Aside from the poems upon love, filling the first division of *The Book of the Rose* it has a miscellaneous group, of which the two that best represent it, to my fancy, are so widely diverse that their mere mention in juxtaposition is amusing; nevertheless they are the lines "To An Omar Punch Bowl," and the reverent Nativity Song, "When Mary, the Mother, Kissed the Child." The haunting couplets of the former are by no means of the convivial sort, but the essence of memory and desire, the pathos of this dust that is but "wind that hurries by,"—is in them. However, to be quoted, they need their full context, as does the Nativity Song mentioned.

Mr. Roberts has a rare sympathy with childhood, and a gift of reaching the hearts of the little ones; the "Sleepy Man" and "Wake-up Song" could scarcely be improved; note the picturing in the former and the drowsihood in its falling cadences:

When the Sleepy Man comes with the dust on his eyes
(Oh, weary, my Dearie, so weary!)

He shuts up the earth, and he opens the skies.
(So hush-a-by, weary my Dearie !)

He smiles through his fingers, and shuts up the sun ;
(Oh, weary, my Dearie, so weary !)
The stars that he loves he lets out one by one.
(So hush-a-by, weary my Dearie !)

He comes from the castles of Drowsy-boy Town ;
(Oh, weary, my Dearie, so weary !)
At the touch of his hand the tired eyelids fall down.
(So hush-a-by, weary my Dearie !)

• • • • •
Then the top is a burden, the bugle a bane,
(Oh, weary, my Dearie, so weary !)
When one would be faring down Dream-a-way Lane.
(So hush-a-by, weary my Dearie !)

When one would be wending in Lullaby Wherry
(Oh, weary, my Dearie, so weary !)
To Sleepy Man's Castle by Comforting Ferry.
(So hush-a-by, weary my Dearie !)

Mr. Roberts has collected his several volumes, exclusive of *The Book of the Rose*, into one, eliminating such of the earlier work as falls short of his standard of criticism, and adding new matter showing growth and constantly broadening affinity with life. He manifests more and more the potentialities of his nature, and while all of his later work does not ring equally true, the majority of it is instinct with sincerity and high idealism, and one may go to it for unforced, unconventional song, having art without trammels, for a breath of the ozone of nature, and

for suggestive thoughts upon life and the things of the spirit. Its creed is epitomized in the following lines, pregnant with suggestion to the votary of Art, the creed of the idealist, and yet the truer realist:

Said Life to Art: I love thee best
 Not when I find in thee
My very face and form, expressed
 With dull fidelity.

But when in thee my longing eyes
 Behold continually
The mystery of my memories
 And all I crave to be.

VIII

EDITH M. THOMAS

AN earnest idealist is Miss Edith Thomas, who commits to her song a vital word and sends it as a courier to arouse that drowsy lodge-keeper, the soul, and bid him give ear to the importunate message of life. Not by outwardly strenuous numbers, however, is this end achieved; on the contrary, Miss Thomas is a quiet singer whose thoughtful restraint is one of her chief distinctions. The spiritual tidings which she intrusts to her song are destined to be delivered in the silence of the soul; none the less are they sent to awaken it, and none the less do they bide and knock at the door of one's spirit until one rise and open to them.

The ideality of her work has been from the outset its most informing quality; the thoughts beyond the thrall of words that pass, in Maeterlinck's phrase, "like great white birds, across the heart," had brushed with their unsullied wings the thoughts of every-day and left a light upon them, giving assurance, when the

art was still unshapen, that the vision had been revealed. One seldom reads a poem by Miss Thomas without bringing away from it a suggestive thought or a spiritual stimulus, sometimes introduced so subtly that it breaks upon one in the after-light of memory rather than at the moment of reading; for Miss Thomas is not a homiletic singer, obtruding the moral. She is too much the artist for that. She delivers no crass counsel, does no obvious and commonplace moralizing; but she has the nature that resolves every phase of life into its spiritual elements, and, seen imaginatively, these elements are material for Art. When once they are wrought into song by Miss Thomas, they have lost none of the force of the original idea, none of the thought-giving value; but into them has been infused the spiritual value in a subtly philosophical way, by which the experience is resolved into its personal import to the soul.

Miss Thomas has written many beautiful lyrics, but her characteristic expression is too thoughtful to be set to the lighter and more purely musical rhythms. She has a finely cultivated style, inventive in form, and often employing richly cadenced measures, but one feels rather that the cadence is well tested, the

form well fitted to the theme, than that the impulse created its own form and sang itself into being. One cannot, however, generalize upon such varied work as that of Miss Thomas. Because one feels back of the work the thinker, the analyst, weighing even the emotion in the balance of reflection, is not to say that the work is cold or unemotional; on the contrary, it is deeply human and sympathetic, and in such inspirations as are drawn directly from life it is often highly impassioned; but in many of the poems the motive is drawn from some classic source, such as, "At Seville," "Ulysses at the Court of Alcinous," "The Roses of Pieria," "Timon to the Athenians," "The Voice of the Laws," being Socrates' reply to Crito,—and while each of these poems, and particularly the last, has both beauty and strength, they naturally lack the warmth and impulse that accompany more personal themes.

As compared with the large body of Miss Thomas' work, that for which the inspiration has been sought far afield is slight; but it is sufficient to set the mark of deliberate intent upon many of the poems and detract from the spontaneity of the work as a whole. Miss Thomas is so accomplished and ready a technician that the temptation to utilize such allu-

sions and themes from literature as have artistic possibilities, is a strong one; nor is it one to be deprecated, except in the ultimate tendency that one shall let the inspiration from without take precedence of that within, thus quenching one's own creative faculty. With Miss Thomas such a result is far distant, if not impossible, for life is to her the vital reality, and the majority of her themes are drawn from its passing drama; but there is also the other phase of her art, and a sufficiently prominent one to be noted. Her work falls under two distinct heads,—poetry of the intellect and poetry of the heart,—and while her most emotional verse has a fine subtlety of thought, and her most intellectual a subtlety of emotion, making them not crassly one or the other, none the less is the distinction apparent, and it is easy to put one's hand upon the work into which her own temperament has entered and which her creative moods have shaped. Upon Art itself she has written some of her most luminous poems, holding genius to be one with that force by which

The blossom and the sod
Feel the unquiet God,

and exclaiming to a doubting votary,

Despair thine art !
Thou canst not hush those cries,
Thou canst not blind those eyes,
Thou canst not chain those feet,
But they a path shall beat
 Forth from thine heart.
 Forth from thine heart !
There wouldst thou dungeon him,
In cell both close and dim —
The key he turns on thee,
And out he goeth free !
 Despair thine art !

In her poem, "The Compass," she carries the reasoning farther, and declares that if one is to wait upon the Force within and give it freedom, he shall also be trusted to follow where it leads, knowing that if temporarily deflected it will adjust itself to the truth as surely as the compass, thrown momentarily out of poise, searches and finds its compelling attraction. Aside from the analogy in the lines, the dignity of their movement, the harmonious fall of the cæsura, and the fine blending of word and tone, render them highly artistic :

Touch but with gentlest finger the crystal that circles the
 Mariner's Guide —
To the East and the West how it drifts, and trembles, and
 searches on every side !

But it comes to its rest, and its light lance poises only one
 self-same way
 Since ever a ship spread her marvellous sea-wings, or plunged
 her swan-breast through the spray —
 For North points the needle !

Ye look not alone for the sign of the lode-star ; the lode-
 stone too lendeth cheer ;
 Yet one in the heavens is established forever, and one is
 compelled through the sphere.
 What ! and ye chide not the fluttering magnet that seemeth
 to fly its troth,
 Yet even now is again recording its fealty's silent oath —
 As North points the needle !

Praise ye bestow that, though mobile and frail as a tremu-
 lous spheret of dew,
 It obeys an imperial law that ye know not (yet know that it
 guideth most true) ;
 So, are ye content with its fugitive guidance — ye, but the
 winds' and waves' sport ! —
 So, are ye content to sail by your compass, and come in fair
 hour to your port ;
 For North points the needle !

And now, will ye censure, because, of compulsion, the spirit
 that rules in this breast,
 To show what a poet must show, was attempered, and
 touched with a cureless unrest,
 Swift to be moved with all human mutation, to traverse
 passion's whole range ?
 Mood succeeds mood, and humor fleets humor, yet never
 heart's drift can they change,
 For North points the needle !

Inconstant I were to that Sovereign Bidding (why or whence given unknown),
Failed I to tent the entire round of motive ere sinking back
to my own :
The error be yours, if ye think my faith erring or deem my
allegiance I fly ;
I follow my law and fulfil it all duly — and look ! when your
doubt runneth high —
North points the needle !

These lines illustrate Miss Thomas' command of accurately descriptive phrase : the compass is "mobile and frail as a tremulous spheret of dew," and touched never so lightly, " how it drifts, and trembles, and searches on every side." One feels that just these words, and no others, convey at once the sense of its delicacy, and the almost sentient instinct by which it seeks its attraction. Miss Thomas' diction in general shows rather fineness of discrimination in the expressive value of words than a strenuous attempt to seek out those which are "literary" and inobvious. There is rarely a word that calls undue attention to itself; but when a passage or poem is analyzed, one cannot but note the fine sense of values in its phraseology. Her diction has elegance without conventionality, but one would scarcely say that it is highly temperamental. It is flexible, colorful, picturesque, but has not so strong a note of personality

that one meeting a poem of Miss Thomas' by chance would be able to identify it by its evidence of word and phrase, as one may often do in the work of a poet. Miss Thomas' marked individuality is rather in the essence of her work, its motive, mood, and thought, than in its distinctive style, which is too varied to be recognized by its touch.

Now and again in her earlier work the influence of Emerson comes out unmistakably. "A Reed Shaken With the Wind," "Child and Poet," and "The Naturalist," are distinctly Emersonian in manner and atmosphere—the first especially so in its consecutive, unstanzaed lines, and in the note pervading it. Whatever mannerisms of style Miss Thomas acquired from Emerson were, however, quickly cast off; but with his thought she could scarcely fail to have a continued kinship, if not a debt, so much does her own work incline to the spiritually philosophical. One may not trace influences at all definitely in her work, though felt in its general enrichment and breadth. In "Palingenesis," from her last collection, she has done what poets before her have done,—embodiment in song the theory of evolution; but it has rarely been done better than in these stanzas, which seize the spiritual side of the scientific

fact and fuse it with the imagination. It has been shudderingly foreboded that in this baldly practical age the poet would come singing of science; but if he invest it with the life and charm that pervade Miss Thomas' incursion into the realm, there is no immediate cause for alarm. Indeed, a scientific truth, seen through the lens of a poet's imagination, often takes on a beauty that no conception of fancy could duplicate, witness Whitman's line:

Cycles ferried my cradle, rowing and rowing like cheerful boatmen,

from a poem upon the same theme which inspires Miss Thomas' stanzas:

I dwelt with the God, ere He fashioned the worlds with their
heart of fire,
Ere the vales sank down at His voice or He spake to the
mountains, "Aspire!"
Or ever the sea to dark heaven made moan in its hunger for
light,
Or the four winds were born of the morning and missioned
on various flight.

In a fold of His garment I slept, without motion, or knowl-
edge, or skill,
While age upon age the thought of creation took shape at
His will;

.

Part had I not in the scheme till He sent me to work on the reef.

Nude, in the seafoam, to clothe it with coralline blossom and leaf.

Patient I wrought — as a weaver that blindly plyeth the loom,

Nor knew that the God dwelt with me, there as I wrought in the gloom.

Strength had I not till chiefdom supreme of the waters He gave ;

Joyous I went — tumultuous ; the billows before me I drove — Myself as a surge of the sea when impelled by the driving storm ;

Nor knew that the God dwelt with me, there in leviathan's form.

Lightness I had not till, decked with light plumes, He endued me with speed —

Buoyant the hollow quill as the hollow stem of the reed !

And I gathered my food from the ooze, and builded my home at His word ;

Nor knew that the God dwelt with me clothed in the garb of a bird.

I trod not the earth till on plains unmeasured He sent me to rove,

To taste of the sweetness of grass and the leaves of the summer grove.

For shelter He hollowed the cave ; fresh springs in the rock He unsealed ;

But I knew not the God dwelt with me that ranged as a beast of the field.

Foresight I had not, nor memory, nor vision that sweeps in the skies,

Till He made me man, and bade me uplift my marvelling eyes !
 My hands I uplifted — my cries grew a prayer — on the green turf I knelt,
 And knew that the God had dwelt with me wherever of old I had dwelt !

Wild is the life of the wave, and free is the life of the air,
 And sweet is the life of the measureless pastures, unburdened of care ;
 They all have been mine, I upgather them all in the being of man,
 Who knoweth, at last, that the God hath dwelt with him since all life began !

My heritage draw I from these — I love tho' I leave them behind ;
 But shall I not speak for the dumb, and lift up my sight for the blind ?
 I am kin to the least that inhabits the air, the waters, the clod ;
 They wist not what bond is between us, they know not the Indwelling God !
 For under my hands alone the charactered Past hath He laid,
 One moment to scan ere it fall like a scroll into ashes and fade !
 Enough have I read to know and declare — my ways He will keep,
 If onward I go, or again in a fold of His garment I sleep !

There is no internal evidence in these strongly phrased and stirring lines that a woman's hand penned them ; their vigor, grasp,

and resonant freedom of measure would do credit to Browning; and here one may pause to observe the adaptability of Miss Thomas' style to her thought. In certain poems demanding the delicate airy touch, such as, "Dew-Bells," Titania herself could scarcely speak in lighter phrase, nor could a tenderer, sweeter note be infused into a poem than has been put into the lines: "The soul of the violet haunts me so," or into the poem incident to the query, "Is it Spring again in Ohio?" — but when the thought demands virility of word and measure Miss Thomas has a vivid energy of style, masculine in its force. One may argue that there is no sex in poetry, that, coming close home for illustration, a woman's hand might have fashioned the work of Longfellow and Whittier; but what of Lowell, Whitman, and Emerson? These names alone prove sex-evidence in art; nor is any disparagement meant to Longfellow and Whittier that their characteristic notes were of the gentler, sweeter sort. We know they could be sufficiently robust upon occasion, particularly the latter; but, in general, art obeys a temperamental polarity giving evidence of the masculine or feminine mind that produced it. Miss Thomas' work in the main proves the woman, and the typical

woman, who has lived, suffered, joyed ; drank, indeed, the brimming beaker from the foam to the lees ; but on her more philosophical and intellectual side, in such poems as "The Voice of the Laws," or "The Flutes of the Gods" and in many others, she has all a man's virility. It is partly for this reason that her style is too varied to be identified by a random poem, the temperamental differences in the work are so marked, and the style changes so entirely with them, as to elude classification under one head.

For one of her heartening notes and quick-step measures take "Rank-And-File" from her last volume, *The Dancers* :

You might have painted that picture,
I might have written that song :
Not ours, but another's, the triumph,
'T is done and well done — so 'long !

You might have fought in the vanguard,
I might have struck at foul Wrong :
What matters whose hand was the foremost ?
'T is done and well done — so 'long !

So 'long, and into the darkness,
With the immemorial throng —
Foil to the few and the splendid :
All 's done and well done — so 'long !

Yet, as we pass, we will pledge them —
 The bold, and the bright, and the strong,
(Ours was never black envy) :
 All 's done and well done — so 'long !

Miss Thomas is very keen to see what may be termed the subjectively dramatic side of life,— all the subtlety of motive and impulse working out of sight to shape the destiny, she sees with acute divination; but constructively she lacks the dramatic touch. In "A Winter Swallow," her one definite incursion into this field, it cannot be said that she has done such work as would represent her at her real value either in the literary beauty of the lines, or in the insight displayed in the characterization.

So short a dramatic effort, however, could scarcely do more than indicate the likelihood or unlikelihood of Miss Thomas' success in a more sustained plot; and while a theme having in itself warmer elements of sympathy would doubtless create for itself a more moving and vital art, there is very little to indicate that the effort would be wisely spent. One is inclined more fully to this opinion by the lack of dramatic impulse in Miss Thomas' narrative poem turning upon the story of Genevra of the Amieri, she who woke by night from the death-trance to find herself entombed in the powerful vault of

her ancestors, and, being spurned from her father's and her husband's doors, as a haunting spirit, took refuge at that of her former lover, to whom, being adjudged by the law as dead, she was reunited.

The mere skeleton of this story is palpitant with life; but in Miss Thomas' cultivated and beautiful recital, wherein the well-rounded, suave pentameter falls never otherwise than richly on the ear, all the vibrant, thrilling, terrifying elements of the story have been refined away. When Genevra wakens in the tomb, and touches in the darkness the human skeletons about her, and struggles to free herself from the entangling cerements, and beats with superhuman strength at the gratings until they yield to her hand, and to the outer stone until it unseals at her terrified touch, — there are dramatic materials which even history has infused with red blood ; but either Miss Thomas does not conceive the situation as having thrills and terrors, or has not been able to impart them to her record, for she sums the matter up in these two stanzas, illustrating, apparently, the Gentle Art of Being Buried Alive :

And now she dreams she lies in marble rest
Within the Amieri's chapel-tomb,
With hands laid idly on an idle breast.

How sweetly can the carven lilies bloom,
As they would soften her untimely doom. . . .

Nay, living flowers are these that brush her cheek !
She starts awake amid the nether gloom,

From out dead swoon returning faint and weak ;
No voice hath she, but none might hear her, could she speak.

Vaguely she reaches from her stony bed ;

The blessed moonbeam, gliding underground,
Like angel ministrant from heaven sped,

To rescue one in frosty irons long bound,
Cheers her new-beating heart, till she has found

Recourse of memory and use of will.

Then soon her feet are on the ladder-round,

The stone above gives way to patient skill ;
And now the wide night greets her, bright, and lone, and
still.

The story of Genevra, as told by Miss Thomas, has often great beauty of phrase, picturesque descriptive passages of Florentine life, delicacy in the scene between the reunited lovers when Genevra seeks Antonio's gate, and fine pathos in the lines spoken by her father to her supposed spirit returning to haunt him ; in short, the poem has all but the dramatic touch. The narrative force is lost in the poetic elaboration.

But although Miss Thomas has not the outward art of the dramatist, she has, as earlier stated, a keenly intuitive sense of the spiritually dramatic in passing life. Upon love she has written with so keen a psychology that certain

of the poems probe to the quick of that source of pain; for it is not the lighter phase, already so well celebrated, that she sings, but oftener the fateful, the inexplicable. For illustration, the poem, "They Said," presents the caprice of love by which (they say), it goes to those who hold it most lightly, spend it most prodigally, flee it to entice it, and yet weave snares to detain it. The thrust of these stanzas is as delicately keen as a rapier point:

Because thy prayer hath never fed
Dark Atē with the food she craves ;
Because thou dost not hate (they said),
Nor joy to step on foemen's graves ;
Because thou canst not hate, as we,
How poor a creature thou must be,
Thy veins as pale as ours are red !
Go to ! Love loves thee not (they said).

Because by thee no snare was spread
To baffle Love — if Love should stray,
Because thou dost not watch (they said),
To strictly compass Love each way :
Because thou dost not watch, as we,
Nor jealous Care hath lodged with thee,
To strew with thorns a restless bed —
Go to ! Love loves thee not (they said).

Because thy feet were not misled
To jocund ground, yet all infirm,
Because thou art not fond (they said),
Nor dost exact thine heyday term :

Because thou art not fond, as we,
 How dull a creature thou must be,
 Thy pulse how slow — yet shrewd thy head !
 Go to ! Love loves thee not (they said).

Because thou hast not roved to wed
 With those to Love averse or strange,
 Because thou hast not roved (they said),
 Nor ever studied artful change :
 Because thou hast not roved, as we,
 Love paid no ransom rich for thee,
 Nor, seeking thee, unwearied sped.
 Go to ! Love loves thee not (they said).

Ay, so ! because thou thought'st to tread
 Love's ways, and all his bidding do,
 Because thou hast not tired (they said),
 Nor ever wert to Love untrue :
 Because thou hast not tired, as we,
 How tedious must thy service be ;
 Love with thy zeal is surfeited !
 Go to ! Love loves thee not (they said).

Every contradiction of passion is in this poem, and the very refinement of satire, as well. In "The Domino," Miss Thomas images, with a pleasant humor, the various disguises under which one meets Love, and symbolizes in "The Barrier" the infallible intuition, the psychic sense, by which one feels a change not yet apparent.

"A Home-Thrust," wherein the inconstant

one betrays himself by his doubt of another's constancy, and "So It Was Decreed," are also among the psychological bits of delineation; but for the less penetrative but sweeter and more memorable note, there are two short poems, "Vos Non Vobis," and "The Deep-Sea Pearl," tender, human, sufficiently universal to appeal to all and artistically wrought. The first records that,

There was a garden planned in Spring's young days,
Then, Summer held it in her bounteous hand ;
And many wandered thro' its blooming ways ;
But ne'er the one for whom the work was planned.

And it was vainly done—
For what are many, if we lack the one ?

There was a song that lived within the heart
Long time — and then on Music's wing it strayed :
All sing it now, all praise its artless art ;
But ne'er the one for whom the song was made.

And it was vainly done—
For what are many, if we lack the one ?

The whole argument of Art versus Life is summed up in this poem. The second lyric, of eight lines, is as delicate as the symbol it employs, and globes within it, as the drop within the pearl, many a life-history:

The love of my life came not
As love unto others is cast ;
For mine was a secret wound —
But the wound grew a pearl, at last.

The divers may come and go,
The tides, they arise and fall ;
The pearl in its shell lies sealed,
And the Deep Sea covers all.

It is in such poems as bring from the heart of life a certain poignant strain that Miss Thomas is at her best. She is not a melancholy singer, but her work is too deeply rooted in the pain and unrest of life to be joyous. A certain longing, an almost impalpable sadness, pervades much of her verse. Nevertheless, it is not so emphasized as to be depressing, and, indeed, adds just the touch of personality by which one treasures that which he feels has been fused in experience. This pertains to the more intimate phases of Miss Thomas' work. Upon death she has written with deep feeling and insight, — feeling all too vital to be analyzed, such as renders Spring the season

When that blithe, forerunning air
Breathes more hope than thou canst bear.

Nature is often, in her verse, as it must be to any sympathetic mind, a keener source of pain than of pleasure, instinct as it is with memories, and flaunting before one's thwarted dreams the infallible fulfilment of its hopes; yet she has

for it an intense passion, and enters into its most delicate and undefined moods with swift comprehension.

"The Soul of the Violet," previously referred to, is an illustration in point, being a purely subjective treatment of a nature-suggestion. When spring is yet too young for promise of bloom, and only in the first respite from the snow,

The brown earth raises a wistful face —
Whenever about the fields I go,
The soul of the violet haunts me so !

I look — there is never a leaf to be seen ;
In the pleachéd grass is no thread of green ;
But I walk as one who would chide his feet
Lest they trample the hope of something sweet !
Here can no flower be blooming, I know —
Yet the soul of the violet haunts me so !

Again and again that thrilling breath,
Fresh as the life that is snatched out of death,
Keen as the blow that Love might deal
Lest a spirit in trance should outward steal —
So thrilling that breath, so vital that blow —
The soul of the violet haunts me so !

Is it the blossom that slumbers as yet
Under the leaf-mould dank and wet,

• • • • •
Or is it the flower shed long ago ?
The soul of the violet haunts me so !

The subjective touch in the final couplet gives the key-note to the poem.

Miss Thomas is indeed so subjective in her conception of some of the profounder and more vital losses of life, the sense of the irrevocable and irreparable is so keenly emphasized to her mind as to communicate almost a hint of fatalism to certain of her poems, such as "Expiation" and "A Far Cry To Heaven." The latter is such an utterance, in its impassioned tone, as might proceed from the lips of the Angel with the Flaming Sword sent to bar one's return to his desecrated Eden. The ultimate effect of such a poem, however, is salutary, as the warning outruns the scath, and one reading it will pay closer heed to the import of the "white hour" of his life. On its technical side, the poem has all the ease of an improvisation, and so at one are the metre and thought that line succeeds line with a surge and a rhythm, as wave follows wave to the shore:

What! dost thou pray that the outgone tide be rolled back
on the strand,
The flame be rekindled that mounted away from the smoul-
dering brand,
The past-summer harvest flow golden through stubble-lands
naked and sere,
The winter-gray woods upgather and quicken the leaves of
last year? —

Thy prayers are as clouds in a drouth ; regardless, unfruitful,
 they roll ;
 For this, that thou prayest vain things, 't is a far cry to
 Heaven, my soul, —
 Oh, a far cry to Heaven !

Thou dreamest the word shall return, shot arrow-like into
 the air,
 The wound in the breast where it lodged be balmed and
 closed for thy prayer,
 The ear of the dead be unsealed, till thou whisper a boon
 once denied,
 The white hour of life be restored, that passed thee unprized,
 undescribed ! —
 Thy prayers are as runners that faint, that fail, within sight
 of the goal,
 For this, that thou prayest fond things, 't is a far cry to
 Heaven, my soul, —
 Oh, a far cry to Heaven !

And cravest thou fondly the quivering sands shall be firm to
 thy feet,
 The brackish pool of the waste to thy lips be made whole-
 some and sweet ?
 And cravest thou subtly the bane thou desirest, be wrought
 to thy good,
 As forth from a poisonous flower a bee conveyeth safe food ?
 For this, that thou prayest ill things, thy prayers are an
 anger-rent scroll ;
 The chamber of audit is closed, — 't is a far cry to Heaven,
 my soul, —
 Oh, a far cry to Heaven !

For the strong, but aloe-tinctured draught of
 this poem, "Sursum Corda" is the antidote.

Here we have the same experience that went to the making of the former poem, and touched it with bitterness, turned to sweetness and a fervor of exaltation, when viewed from the hour of illumination at the last. It is throughout a valiant, noble song, of which the following lines show the spirit:

Up and rejoice, and know thou hast matter for revel, my
heart !
Up and rejoice, not heeding if drawn or undrawn be the
dart
Last winged by the Archer whose quiver is full for sweeter
than thou,
That yet will sing out of the dust when the ultimate arrow
shall bow.

.

Now thou couldst bless and God-speed, without bitterness
bred in thine heart,
Loves, that, outworn and time-wasted, were fain from thy
lodge to depart :
Though dulled by their passing, thy faith, like a flower
upfolded by night,
New kindness should quicken again, as a flower feels the
touch of new light.
Ay, now thou couldst love, undefeated, with ardor instinct
from pure Love,—
Warmed from a sun in the heavens that knows not beneath
nor above,
Nor distance its patience to weary, nor substance unpierced
by its ray.

.

Now couldst thou pity and smile, where once but the scourge
thou wouldst lay ;
Now to thyself couldst show mercy, and up from all penance
arise,
Knowing there runneth abroad a chastening flame from the
skies.

Doubt not thou hast matter for revel, for once thou wouldst
cage thee in steel,
And, wounded, wouldst seek out the balm and the cordial
cunning to heal ;
But now thou hast knowledge more sovran, more kind, than
leech-craft can wield :
Never Design sent thee forth to be safe from the scath of
the field,
But bade thee stand bare in the midst, and offer free way to
all scath
Piercing thee inly — so only might Song have an outgoing
path.

• • • • •
But now 't is not thine to bestow, to abide, or be known in
thy place ;
Withdraweth the voice into silence, dissolveth the form and
the face.
Death — Life thou discernest ! Enlarged as thou art, thy
ground thou must shift !
Love over-liveth. Throb thou forth quickly. Heart, be
uplift !

The hard-won philosophy of nearly all lives
is summed up in these stanzas, pregnant therefore with suggestion to those who have the un-trodden way before them, and full of uplift to those who have the course behind them, and

view it in retrospect as but "a stuff to try the soul's strength on."

Not only in this poem, but throughout her work, the evolution of Miss Thomas' philosophy of life is marked, had one time to trace its growing significance. She has sounded many stops, touched many keys of feeling and thought, so that one may do no more in a brief comment than suggest the various phases of her widely inclusive song.

IX

MADISON CAWEIN

IN nothing, more than in his attitude toward nature, does the modern betray himself. Ours is the questioning age, the truth-seeking, the scientific age; when, for illustration, Maeterlinck laid his philosophy by to observe with infinite pains the habits of the bee and to record, without the intrusion of too many deductions, the amazing facts as nature passed them in review before his eyes,—he became the naturalist-philosopher, selling days, not for speculations, but for laws. To the poet also has come the desire which came to the philosopher to demonstrate the truth within the beauty; to penetrate to the finer law at the heart of things; in short, there has arisen what one may term the poet-naturalist, and in the recent work of Mr. Madison Cawein we have perhaps the most characteristic illustration among our own poets of the younger school, of this phase of nature-interpretation.

Before considering it, however, one must trace briefly Mr. Cawein's evolutionary steps

through the haunted ways of nature in its imaginative and romantic phases, which enthralled him first, by no means wholly, but predominantly, and of which he has left many records in his volume, *Myth and Romance*. Of the more artistic poems, worthy to be put in comparison with his later work, there are several from the opening group of the collection, as these picturesque lines containing the query:

What wood-god, on this water's mossy curb,
 Lost in reflection of earth's loveliness,
 Did I, just now, unconsciously disturb?
 I, who haphazard, wandering at a guess,
 Came on this spot, wherein, with gold and flame
 Of buds and blooms, the season writes its name.—
 Ah me ! could I have seen him ere alarm
 Of my approach aroused him from his calm !
 As he, part Hamadryad and, mayhap,
 Part Faun, lay here ; who left the shadow warm
 As wild-wood rose, and filled the air with balm
 Of his sweet breath as with ethereal sap.

Or from the same group these charming glimpses of "an unseen presence that eludes":—

Perhaps a Dryad, in whose tresses cling
 The loamy odors of old solitudes,
 Who, from her beechen doorway, calls ;

• • • • •



Or, haply 't is a Naiad now who slips,
Like some white lily, from her fountain's glass,
While from her dripping hair and breasts and hips,
The moisture rains cool music on the grass.

• • • • •

Or now it is an Oread — whose eyes
Are constellated dusk — who stands confessed,
As naked as a flow'r; her heart's surprise,
Like morning's rose, mantling her brow and breast:
She, shrinking from my presence, all distressed
Stands for a startled moment ere she flies,
Her deep hair blowing, up the mountain crest,
Wild as a mist that trails along the dawn.
And is 't her footfalls lure me? or the sound
Of airs that stir the crisp leaf on the ground?
And is 't her body glimmers on yon rise?
Or dog-wood blossoms snowing on the lawn?

Who shall deny both charm and accomplishment to these lines, particularly to the glimpse of the dryad in her "beechen doorway," but on the next page of the same volume occurs this more realistic apostrophe addressed to the "Rain-Crow," giving a foretokening hint of his later manner of observation, and who shall say that it has not a truer charm and accomplishment?

Can freckled August, — drowsing warm and blonde
Beside a wheat-shock in the white-topped mead,
In her hot hair the oxeyed daisies wound, —
O bird of rain, lend aught but sleepy heed

To thee? when no plumed weed, no feather'd seed
 Blows by her; and no ripple breaks the pond,
 That gleams like flint between its rim of grasses,
 Through which the dragonfly forever passes
 Like splintered diamond.

Drouth weights the trees, and from the farmhouse eaves
 The locust, pulse-beat of the summer day,
 Throbs; and the lane, that shambles under leaves
 Limp with the heat — a league of rutty way —
 Is lost in dust; and sultry scents of hay
 Breathe from the panting meadows heaped with sheaves —
 Now, now, O bird, what hint is there of rain,
 In thirsty heaven or on burning plain,
 That thy keen eye perceives?

But thou art right. Thou prophesiest true.
 For hardly hast thou ceased thy forecasting,
 When, up the western fierceness of scorched blue,
 Great water-carrier winds their buckets bring
 Brimming with freshness. How their dippers ring
 And flash and rumble! lavishing dark dew
 On corn and forestland, that, streaming wet,
 Their hilly backs against the downpour set,
 Like giants vague in view.

The butterfly, safe under leaf and flower,
 Has found a roof, knowing how true thou art;
 The bumble-bee, within the last half-hour,
 Has ceased to hug the honey to its heart;
 While in the barnyard, under shed and cart,
 Brood-hens have housed.— But I, who scorned thy power,
 Barometer of the birds, —like August there,—
 Beneath a beech, dripping from foot to hair,
 Like some drenched truant, cower.

This, however, is airy imagination as compared with the naturalist fidelity of much of Mr. Cawein's work in *Weeds by the Wall*, *A Voice on the Wind*, and in *Kentucky Poems*, — to which Mr. Edmund Gosse contributes a sympathetic introduction, — books chiefly upon nature, occasionally reverting to the mythological or more imaginative phase of the subject, but in the main set to reveal the fact, with its aura of beauty; for it is never the purely elemental side of a nature-manifestation that presents itself to Mr. Cawein, but always the fact haloed by its poetic penumbra. Indeed, the limitation of his earlier work lay in the excess of fancy over reflection and art; but his growth has been away from the romantic toward the realistic and individual, and upon this side its best assurance for the future is given. Mr. Cawein has yet far too facile a pen not to be betrayed by it into excesses both of production and fancy. He writes too much to keep to the standard set in his best work of the past two or three years, and lacks still to a great degree the self-scrutiny which would reject much that he includes; but granting all this, it must be apparent to any reader of his work that he is not a singer making verse for diversion, but one to whom poetry is the very breath of his

spirit, one who lives by this air, and can by no other; and while it is one thing to be driven through vision-haunted days by beauty's urge and unrest, and another to body forth the vision in the calm; one thing to have had the mystery whispered by a thousand wordless voices, and another to communicate it in terms of revealing truth — it is notable in Mr. Cawein's verse that he is teaching his hand to obey him more surely each year, and is producing work that quickens one's perception of the world without, and adds to his sum of beauty. It is serious work, work with purpose, and while its fancy still runs at times to the fantastic, it shows so marked a growth in technique and spirit from year to year that one may well let to-morrow take care of to-morrow with a poet who brings to his art the ideal which inspires Mr. Cawein.

To return, then, to his distinctive field, Kentucky, and his characteristic note of nature, one observes that a hand-book of the flora of his state could doubtless be compiled from his poems, so do they leave the beaten path in their range of observation; but it would be a botany plus imagination and sympathy, analysts keener than microscopes, and in it would be recorded the habits of the bluet, the jewel-weed, the

celandine, the black-cohosh, the bell-flower, the lobelia, the elecampane, the oxalis, the touch-me-not, the Indian-pipe, and many another unused to hear its name rehearsed in song.

One follows the feet of September to the forest

Windowed wide with azure, doored with green,
Through which rich glimmers of her robe were seen —
Now, like some deep marsh-mallow, rosy gold ;
Now like the great Joe-Pye-weed, fold on fold
Of heavy mauve ; and now, like the intense
Massed iron-weed, a purple opulence ;

or wanders under the Hunter's Moon to watch
the frost spirits

. . . with fine fingers, phantom-cold,
Splitting the wahoo's pods of rose, and thin
The bittersweet's balls o' gold
To show the coal-red berries packed within.

Autumn is apparently, however, little to his liking, and in his attitude toward it he reveals the Southerner; for it is not only Kentucky flora and fauna, but Kentucky climate which Mr. Cawein celebrates, treating Autumn not with the buoyancy that to a Northerner renders it a season of lusty infection, but almost wholly in its aspect of sadness. In his volume called *Undertones* he has a group of poems upon

the withdrawing year, sounding only this note, which is the prevalent one when touching upon the same theme in his other volumes. He glimpses

. . . the Fall

Like some lone woman in a ruined hall
Dreaming of desolation and the shroud ;
Or through decaying woodlands goes, down-bowed,
Hugging the tatters of her gipsy shawl ;

and speaks elsewhere of

. . . the days gray-huddled in the haze ;
Whose foggy footsteps drip.

Winter is encountered with far scantier cheer, and rarely receives the grace of salutation, as its face appears dire and malevolent to this lover of the sun. To follow Mr. Cawein's work with such a purpose in view would be to present an interesting study in climatic psychology, for though no mention were made of the section in which he writes, the internal evidence is sufficient to localize the poems. Not alone the gracious side of the Southern summer is presented, but the fearful time of drouth when

The hot sunflowers by the glaring pike
Lift shields of sultry brass ; the teasel tops,
Pink-thorned, advance with bristling spike on spike
Against the furious sunlight. Field and copse
Are sick with summer : now, with breathless stops,

The locusts cymbal ; now grasshoppers beat
Their castanets : and rolled in dust, a team, —
Like some mean life wrapped in its sorry dream, —
An empty wagon rattles through the heat.

This is vivid picturing and a fine touch of realism fused with imagination which compares the team rolled in dust to

“ Some mean life wrapped in its sorry dream.”

Immediately following the poem upon “ Drouth,” of which there are several stanzas sketched with minuteness, occurs one entitled “ Before the Rain,” opening with these pictorial lines :

Before the rain, low in the obscure east,
Weak and morose the moon hung, sickly gray ;
Around its disc the storm mists, cracked and creased,
Wove an enormous web, wherein it lay
Like some white spider hungry for its prey.
Vindictive looked the scowling firmament,
In which each star, that flashed a dagger ray,
Seemed filled with malice of some dark intent.

The moon caught in its creased web of storm mists is another well-visioned image. Mr. Cawein carries the record on to a third poem, picturing the “ Broken Drouth; ” all are notable for the infusion of atmosphere,— climatic atmosphere, in this case; and indeed of this palpable sort there is plenty, infused into words that fairly parch the page in such poems as

"Heat," or "To the Locust," which give abundant evidence that Mr. Cawein knows whereof he speaks and is not supposing a case. The stanzas to "The Grasshopper" will deepen this conviction when one looks them up in the volume called *Weeds by the Wall*.

Mr. Cawein has poems in celebration of many other of the creatures whom he links in fellowship with man in his keenly observant verse. "The Twilight Moth," "The Leaf Cricket," "The Tree Toad," "The Chipmunk," and even the despised "Screech-Owl," are observed and celebrated with impartial sympathy and love. He shelters in the wood during a summer rain to learn where each tiny fellow of the earth and air bestows himself, and notes that the "lichen-colored moths" are pressed "like knots against the trunks of trees;" that the bees are wedged like "clots of pollen" in hollow blooms, and that the "mantis, long-clawed, furtive, lean," and the dragonfly are housed together beneath the wild-grape's leaves and gourds. Each creature's haunt, 'neath rock or root, or frail roof-bloom, is determined as a naturalist might lie in wait during the summer storm to record for Science's sake each detail of this forest tenantry.

Imagination has, however, touched it to beauty, while losing none of the fidelity.

To the "Twilight Moth," "gnome wrought of moonbeam fluff and gossamer," he addresses in another poem these delicate lines :

Dusk is thy dawn ; when Eve puts on her state

 Of gold and purple in the marbled west,

Thou comest forth like some embodied trait,

 Or dim conceit, a lily-bud confessed ;

Or, of a rose, the visible wish ; that, white,

Goes softly messengering through the night,

 Whom each expectant flower makes its guest.

All day the primroses have thought of thee,

 Their golden heads close-haremed from the heat ;

All day the mystic moonflowers silkenly

 Veiled snowy faces, — that no bee might greet

Or butterfly that, weighed with pollen, passed ; —

Keeping Sultana charms for thee, at last,

 Their lord, who comest to salute each sweet.

Cool-throated flowers that avoid the day's

 Too fervid kisses ; every bud that drinks

The tipsy dew and to the starlight plays

 Nocturnes of fragrance, thy winged shadow links

In bonds of secret brotherhood and faith ;

O bearer of their order's shibboleth,

 Like some pale symbol fluttering o'er these pinks.

The final line of this stanza has a certain thinness, and in that above, the ending which turns "sweet" to a noun is too evidently a matter

of expediency; but with these exceptions the stanzas are charming, as are the unquoted ones following them. Before turning to other phases of Mr. Cawein's work, here is a glimpse of the "Tree Toad," pictured with quaint delicacy and fancy:

Secluded, solitary on some underbough,
 Or cradled in a leaf, 'mid glimmering light,
 Like Puck thou crouchest: haply watching how
 The slow toad stool comes bulging, moony white,
 Through loosening loam; or how, against the night,
 The glow-worm gathers silver to endow
 The darkness with; or how the dew conspires
 To hang at dusk with lamps of chilly fires
 Each blade that shrivels now.

• • • • •

Minstrel of moisture! silent when high noon
 Shows her tanned face among the thirsting clover
 And parching meadows, thy tenebrious tune
 Wakes with the dew or when the rain is over.
 Thou troubadour of wetness and damp lover
 Of all cool things! admitted comrade boon
 Of twilight's hush, and little intimate
 Of eve's first fluttering star and delicate
 Round rim of rainy moon!

Art trumpeter of Dwarfland? does thy horn
 Inform the gnomes and goblins of the hour
 When they may gambol under haw and thorn,
 Straddling each winking web and twinkling flower?
 Or bell-ringer of Elfland? whose tall tower

The liriodendron is? from whence is borne
The elfin music of thy bell's deep bass
To summon fairies to their starlit maze,
To summon them or warn.

What a happy bit of realism is that of the toad-stool "bulging, moony white, through loosening loam"! The second of the stanzas may be too Keats-like in atmosphere to have been achieved with unconsciousness of the fact, be that as it may, it is a bit of sheer beauty, as the last is of dainty fancy.

But nature, either realistically or romantically, is not all that Mr. Cawein writes of, though it must be said that his verse upon other themes is so largely tinctured with his nature passion that one rarely comes upon a poem whose illustrations are not drawn more or less from this source, making it difficult to find lyrics wholly upon other themes. Because of his opulent metrical variety, Mr. Cawein is less lyrical than as if he sang in simpler measures. His lyrics, indeed, are in the main his least distinguished work, having frequently, if highly musical, too slight a motive; or if more consequent in motive, not being sufficiently musical; or the melody may be unimpeachable and the theme too romantic to have convincing value, as "*Mignon*," "*Helen*," "*The*

Quest," "Floridian," etc. Indeed, Mr. Cawein sounds the troubadour note all too frequently in his lyrical love poems, which are not without a lightsome grace of phrase and fancy, as becomes this style of verse; but it is likely to be a superficial note, heard but to be forgotten. He can, however, strike a deeper chord, as in the poem called "The End of All," or in that from an earlier volume, bringing a poignant undertone in its strong, calm utterance, beginning

Go your own ways. Who shall persuade me now
To seek with high face for a star of hope?

and ending,

Though sands be black and bitter black the sea,
Night lie before me and behind me night,
And God within far Heaven refuse to light
The consolation of the dawn for me,—
Between the shadowy bourns of Heaven and Hell,
It is enough love leaves my soul to dwell
With memory.

In such notes as these controlled by the Vox Humana stop, Mr. Cawein best reveals himself; another, coming from the heart rather than the fancy, is "Nightshade," from the volume called *Intimations of the Beautiful*, a record of life's bringing to judgment the late-proffered love, unyielded when desired.

"A Wild Iris" is in the later and finer manner, but although love is the spirit of the song, it is embodied chiefly in terms of nature, and would not reveal a different phase of his work from that already shown. This, too, is the case with the two lighter lyrics, "Love In A Day" and "In The Lane," each with a most taking measure; the second a rural song lilting into this note:

When the hornet hangs in the hollyhock,
And the brown bee drones i' the rose,
And the west is a red-streaked four-o'-clock,
And summer is near its close —
It's—Oh, for the gate and the locust lane
And dusk and dew and home again !

Mr. Cawein has frequent poems in celebration of the farm, not only its picturesque cheer, but its dignity and finer idealism. "A Song For Labor" is one of the best; also "Old Homes," an idyllic picture of the Southern plantation, with its gentle haze of reminiscence :

Old homes among the hills ! I love their gardens,
Their old rock-fences, that our day inherits ;
Their doors, 'round which the great trees stand like
wardens ;
Their paths, down which the shadows march like spirits ;
Broad doors and paths that reach bird-haunted gardens.

I see them gray among their ancient acres,
 Severe of front, their gables lichen-sprinkled, —
 Like gentle-hearted, solitary Quakers,
 Grave and religious, with kind faces wrinkled, —
 Serene among their memory-hallowed acres.

Their gardens, banked with roses and with lilies —
 Those sweet aristocrats of all the flowers —
 Where Springtime mints her gold in daffodillies,
 And Autumn coins her marigolds in showers,
 And all the hours are toilless as the lilies.

.

Old homes ! old hearts ! Upon my soul forever
 Their peace and gladness lie like tears and laughter ;
 Like love they touch me, through the years that sever,
 With simple faith ; like friendship, draw me after
 The dreamy patience that is theirs forever.

Mr. Cawein blends the mood and the picture in the simple tenderness of these lines, with their unstriving felicity. Kentucky's more strenuous side also finds a chronicler in his verse: the tragedies of its mountains are told in one of the earlier volumes in such poems as "The Moonshiner," "The Raid," and "Dead Man's Run;" and in *Weeds by the Wall*, in that graphic poem "Feud," sketching with the pencil of a realist the road to the spot

. . . where all the land
 Seems burdened with some curse,

and where, sunk in obliterate growth of
briers, burrs, and ragweed, stands the

. . . huddled house
Where men have murdered men,

and where a terrified silence still broods, for

The place seems thinking of that time of fear
And dares not breathe a sound.

Mr. Howells, in an appreciation of Mr. Cawein's work, after the appearance of *Weeds by the Wall*, spoke of this poem declaring that "What makes one think he will go far and long, and outlive both praise and blame, is the blending of a sense of the Kentucky civilization in such a poem as 'Feud.' Civilization may not be quite the word for the condition of things suggested here, but there can be no doubt of the dramatic and the graphic power that suggests it, and that imparts a personal sense of the tragic squalor, the sultry drouth, the forlorn wickedness of it all." His poem "Ku Klux," in a volume published some time ago, is no less dramatic in touch and theme. Mr. Cawein knows how to set his picture; the ominous portent of the night in which the dark deed is done would be understood from these three lines alone:

The clouds blow heavy towards the moon.
The edge of the storm will reach it soon.
The kildee cries and the lonesome loon.

It may be said of Mr. Cawein's work in general that it shows him to be alert to impression, and gives abundant evidence that life presents itself to him abrim with suggestion. Occasionally, as mentioned above, he wanders too far into the romantic, or yields to the rhyming impulse in a fallow time of thought; but when he throws this facile poetizing by, and betakes himself to nature and life in the capacity of observer and analyst, he produces work notable for its strength, fidelity, and beauty. Metrically, in his earlier work he was influenced by various poets he had read too well. "Intimations of the Beautiful," occupying a part of the volume bearing that name, would be one of his best efforts, in thought and imaginative charm, were it not written in a form developed from "In Memoriam," so that one is haunted by the metrical echo. The poem is devoted to interpretations of life and the spirit, through nature; and has not a division without some revelation from that book of the earth which Mr. Cawein has made his gospel. Its observations, while couched in imagery that now and again tends

to the over-fanciful, are in the main consistent and artistic.

In his recent books, however, he adventures upon his way, seeing wholly by the light of his own eyes, and portraying by the skill of his own hand, so that his work has taken on personality and individuality with each succeeding volume.

Its breath from the bourns of meadow and woodland brings with it a stimulating fragrance, and one closes a book by Mr. Cawein, feeling that he has been in some charmed spot under Southern skies where

Of honey and heat and weed and wheat
The day had made perfume.

X

GEORGE E. WOODBERRY

"For he who standeth in the whole world's hope
Is as a magnet; he shall draw all hearts
To be his shield, all arms to strike his blow."

THESE words by Mr. George E. Woodberry sound the keynote to his art, for he has set himself to disclose the immanence of beauty, of strength; to mould the real to the ideal; and whether he fashions a god, as in "Agathon," or a patriot, as in "My Country," he is concerned only with the development of the spiritual potentialities.

He comes to life, to poetry, enriched by a scholar's culture, but limited by his enrichment on the creative side of his art. He is too well possessed of the immortal melodies to trust the spontaneous notes of his own voice, and hence his verse on its technical side lacks variety and freedom of movement. It has all the cultivated, classical freedom, it flows ever in pure and true numbers; but the masters sing in its overtones, and one catches himself hearkening to them as to Mr. Woodberry him-

self. In other words, those innovations of form which strongly creative thoughts usually bring with them, are not to be found in Mr. Woodberry's work. He has a highly developed sense of rhythm and tone, and very rarely is any metrical canon violated; but the strange new music, the wild free note, that showers down as if from upper air, and sets one's heart a-tingling, is seldom voiced through him. The bird is caged; and while its song is true and beautiful, one comes soon to know its notes and the range of its melody.

Mr. Woodberry has, however, something to say; and if he says it rather with grace and cultivation as to form, than with any startling surprises of artistic effect, his work in its essence, in its spirit, is none the less creative, and upon this side its strength lies. It is ethical and intellectual, rather than emotional, poetry. Though rising often to an impassioned height, it is a passion of the brain, pure and cold as a flood of moonlight. Even the songs of "Wild Eden," and others dealing with love, remain an abstraction; one does not get the sense of personality, except in one or two of them, such as the lyric, "O, Inexpressible As Sweet," and in these few lines called "Divine Awe":

To tremble when I touch her hands,
With awe that no man understands ;
To feel soft reverence arise
When, lover-sweet, I meet her eyes ;
To see her beauty grow and shine
When most I feel this awe divine, —
Whate'er befall me, this is mine ;
And where about the room she moves,
My spirit follows her, and loves.

But although one misses the sense of reality in the songs of love, the ideality is for that reason the more apparent. Love that has sublimated, taken on the rarer part, that has made a mystic interchange with nature and with God, is celebrated in the fervid poem, "He Ate The Laurel And Is Mad," which marks one of the strongest achievements in Mr. Woodberry's work, and especially in a lyric it contains, vibrating with a fine, compulsive melody. The lines preceding the lyric relate the coming of Love into the heart of nature :

And instant back his longing runs
Through bud and billow, through drift and blaze,
Through thought, through prayer, the thousand ways
The spirit journeys from despair ;
He sees all things that they are fair,
But feels them as the daisied sod, —
This slumbrous beauty, this light, this room,
The chrysalis and brokeh tomb
He cleaveth on his way to God.



Then the poem breaks into this pæan, whose music outsings its thought when pushed to analysis; this is one of Mr. Woodberry's metrical exceptions that prove the rule. Here is sheer music making fine but not extraordinary thought seem great, whereas in the majority of his work it is the thought to which one listens rather than the melody; but to the lyric,

I shall go singing over-seas;
“The million years of the planets increase;
All pangs of death, all cries of birth,
Are clasped at one by the heart of the earth.”

I shall go singing by tower and town:
“The thousand cities of men that crown
Empire slow-rising from horde and clan,
Are clasped at one by the heart of man.”

I shall go singing by flower and brier:
“The multitudinous stars of fire,
And man made infinite under the sod,
Are clasped at one by the heart of God.”

I shall go singing by ice and snow:
“Blow soon, dread angel, greatly blow,
Break up, ye gulfs, beneath, above,
Peal, time’s last music, — ‘love, love, love ! ’ ”

Of his recent volume in which he gathers his most representative work, “The North Shore Watch,” a threnody published some years ago,

remains one of the truest poems in sincerity and sympathy of expression,—not only an idyl of remembered comradeship, but of the sea in its many moods; and here one may note that of Mr. Woodberry's references to nature, those of the sea are incomparably the finest, and exhale an invigorating savor of the brine. They are scattered through "The North Shore Watch," but because of the stately sadness of the verse are less representative of his characteristic note than are these buoyant lines which open the poem "Seaward":

I will go down in my youth to the hoar sea's infinite foam ;
I will bathe in the winds of heaven ; I will nest where the white birds home ;
Where the sheeted emerald glitters and drifts with bursts of snow,
In the spume of stormy mornings, I will make me ready and go ;
Where under the clear west weather the violet surge is rolled,
I will strike with the sun in heaven the day-long league of gold ;
Will mix with the waves, and mingle with the bloom of the sunset bar,
And toss with the tangle of moonbeams, and call to the morning star ;
And wave and wing shall know me a seachild even as they,
Of the race of the great seafarers, a thousand years if a day.

These lines have the bracing ozone of the east wind; it is good to fill one's lungs with their freshening breath. In another sea-song, "Homeward Bound," an exultant, grateful hymn, Mr. Woodberry speaks of steering

"Through the weird, red-billowing sunset"

and of falling asleep in the "rocking dark," and with the dawn,

Whether the purple furrow heaps the bows with dazzling spray,
Or buried in green-based masses they dip the storm-swept day,
Or the white fog ribbons o'er them, the strong ship holds her way.

These are pictures in strong color, freehand records with pigment, of which Mr. Woodberry's sea-verse contains many duplicates. He paints the sea as an impressionist, catching her evanescent moods. Aside from the pictorial art of the poem from which the lines above are taken, it thrills with the gladness that abides with one coming

Home from the lonely cities, time's wreck, and the naked woe,
Home through the clean great waters where freemen's pennants blow,
Home to the land men dream of, where all the nations go.

Mr. Woodberry is an American, and ever an American, whatever tribute he may pay at longer dedicated shrines. His ode to "My Country" is an impassioned utterance, full of ideality, and pride in things as they are, not lacking, however, in the prophetic vision of what they shall be. He trusts his country without reservation, recognizes her greater commission in what has terrified many poets,—the absorption of the Eastern isles,—and bids her be swift to yield her benefits:

O, whisper to thy clustered isles
If any rosy promise round them smiles ;
O, call to every seaward promontory
If one of them, perchance, is made the cape of glory.

In technique the ode has a fine sweep and movement; it thrills with flights of feeling, as in these lines near the close,—

And never greater love salutes thy brow
Than his, who seeks thee now.
Alien the sea and salt the foam
Where'er it bears him from his home ;
And when he leaps to land,
A lover treads the strand.

The ode is somewhat marred by prolixity, and now and again by the declamatory impulse getting the better of the creative; but granting

this it remains a fine rhapsody, redeeming the time to those who think the days are evil, and more than ever proving Mr. Woodberry the idealist, if not, indeed, the prophet. In the Emerson Ode, read at the centenary in Boston, there is poem-for-occasion utterance until one reaches the fourth division, where the rhetoric gives way to the pensive note,

I lay the singing laurels down
Upon the silent grave,

and grows from this into a glimsping of Emerson's most characteristic thought, to which Mr. Woodberry sings his own indebtedness. This philosophical résumé has value as critical interpretation and as tribute to whom tribute is due, but it lacks the vital spark as poetry. Odes of this sort are no gauge of a poet's merit, and although Mr. Woodberry does not reveal his weakness in writing of this sort, neither does he to any marked degree reveal his strength. It is work of conventional creditability, reaching occasionally some flight of pure poetry, but pervaded in general by the perfunctory note that results from coercing the muse; and here one may interpolate the wish that all poems-for-occasion might be "put upon the list," for it is certain, not only that

the majority of them "never would be missed," but that poetry would rebound from a most inert weight if lightened of them; nor is this in any sense personal to Mr. Woodberry, whose "Emerson Ode" is a far stronger piece of work than are most compositions of a similar nature. In the "Player's Elegy," in the ode written for the dedication of Alumni Hall at Phillips Exeter Academy, and in the several poems addressed to his fellow-professors at Columbia, there are also passages of spontaneous force and beauty, and the high motive of all must not be lost sight of, but, taken as a whole, this group of poems could scarcely figure in an appraisal of the individuality of his work.

It is on the spiritually philosophical side of his nature that Mr. Woodberry makes his strongest appeal. He is not primarily a poet of love, nor of nature, nor a melodist making music for its own sake; he is an eager, questing follower of the ideal; proclaimer of the truth that

The glamour of God hath a thousand shapes
And every one divine.

When he interprets the mystery of love, or turns to the world without, it is the immanence of the divine that haunts him:

Over the grey leagues of ocean
The infinite yearneth alone ;
The forests with wandering emotion
The thing they know not intone.

He is, indeed, the spirit's votary, and the ultimate purport of his message is the recognition of one's own spirit force. His poem, "Nay, Soul," rebukes the weakness that looks on every side for that which is within; the nature that, seeking props, falls by the way; or, craving understanding, loses the strength that comes of being misunderstood. It subtly divides the legitimate gifts of sympathy from those which weakness demands, and reveals the impossibility of coercing life, or love, or any good to which one's nature is not so magnetized that it comes to him unentreated. These are potent lines: —

Nay, Soul, thy shame forbear !
Between the earth and sky
Was never man could buy
The bread of life with prayer,
Not though his brother there
Saw him with hunger die.

His life a man may give,
But, not for deepest ruth,
Beauty, nor love, nor truth
Whereby himself doth live.
Come home, poor fugitive !
Art thou so poor, forsooth ?

.

Thy heart — look thou aright !
Fear not the wild untrod,
Nor birth, nor burial sod !
Look, and in native light,
Bare as to Christ's own sight,
Living shalt thou see God.

The dramatic poem, "Agathon," which is builded upon the philosophy of Plato, is perhaps the most thoughtful and thought-inciting work in the newly collected volume. It is in no sense of the word dramatic, but doubtless cast in this form from its wider adaptability to the contrasts of thought. The poem is too lengthy to follow an analysis of its philosophy, which is wrought out with subtle elaboration, smacking too much at times of a logical demonstration, but in the main leavened with imaginative phrase. Its poetic climax is in the apostrophe which follows the statement that

The sweetest roamer is a boy's young heart.

The lines form a blank-verse lyric with a rich cadence and movement:

O youngest Roamer, Hesper shuts the day,
White Hesper folded in the rose of eve ;
The still cloud floats, and kissed by twilight sleeps ;
The mists drop down, and near the mountain moor ;
And mute the bird's throat swells with slumber now ;
And now the wild winds to their eyries cling.

.

O youngest Roamer, wonderful is joy,
The rose in bloom that out of darkness springs ;
The lily folded to the wave of life,
The lotus on the stream's dark passion borne.

Ah fortunate he roams who roamth here,
Who finds the happy covert and lies down,
And hears the laughter gurgling in the fount,
And feels the dreamy light imbathe his limbs.
No more he roams, he roams no more, no more.

These lines are reminiscent of Tennyson's "Princess" in their metrical note, particularly in the final couplet of the first stanza, with the "dying fall" of the cadence, bringing to mind :

Now droops the milkwhite peacock like a ghost,
And like a ghost she glimmers on to me.

Mr. Woodberry's poetic affiliation with Tennyson comes out unmistakably in various other poems, leaving no doubt as to one of the masters who sing in his over-tones. Here, for illustration, is a transfusion with Tennyson's "Tears, Idle Tears." One stanza of the flawless lyric reads:

Ah, sad and strange as in dark summer dawns
The earliest pipe of half-awaken'd birds
To dying ears, when unto dying eyes
The casement slowly grows a glimmering square ;
So sad, so strange, the days that are no more.

And Mr. Woodberry says :

O hidden-strange as on dew-heavy lawns
The warm dark scent of summer-fragrant dawns ;
O tender as the faint sea-changes are,
When grows the flush and pales the snow-white star ;
So strange, so tender, to a maid is love.

The mere fact of employing the Tennyson metre, especially when rhymed, would not give the sense of over-assimilation of the other's work were it not for the marked correspondence in the diction and atmosphere, the first line of Tennyson's lyric being expanded into the opening couplet of Mr. Woodberry's stanza, and the final lines of each having so similar a terminology. Shelley is a much more operative force in Mr. Woodberry's poetry than Tennyson, but rather in temperamental kinship than in a technical way. Mr. Woodberry could scarcely fail to have a keen sympathy with the passionate art of Shelley, who lived in the ideal, subtilized and sublimated beyond all reach but that of longing, but who yet set his hand and brain to the strife about him. In his earlier work Mr. Woodberry occasionally shows the Shelley influence in technique and theme, but not in his later verse. One can scarcely understand his leaving in a definitive collection of his work the poem "Love at the Door," whose obligations to Taylor's "Bedouin

Love Song" and Shelley's "I arise from dreams of thee," are about equally distributed. Most poets have their early experiments in the reshaping of forms and themes, but they should be edited out of representative collections. The poem is scarcely a creditable assimilation of the models in question, and does scant justice to Mr. Woodberry's later poetry, making the query more inevitable why he should have left it in the volume, which is in the main so finished and ripe a work. Occasionally one comes upon poems, or passages, which a keener self-criticism would have eliminated, as the line from "Taormina," declaring that

Front more majestic of sea-mountains nowhere is there uplifted the whole earth through,—

whose legitimate place is in a rhetorical textbook, as an exercise in redundancy. Mr. Woodberry is occasionally allured by his theme until the song outruns the motive, but he rarely pads a line like this; even poetic hyperbole has a limit.

In picturesque imagery his work is finely individualized; witness the figurative beauty of the following lines:

The ocean, storming on the rocks,
Shepherds not there his wild, wet flocks.

The soaring ether nowhere finds
 An eyrie for the wingéd winds ;
 Nor has yon glittering sky a charm
 To hive in heaven the starry swarm ;
 And so thy wandering thoughts, my heart,
 No home shall find ; let them depart.

The two sonnets "At Gibraltar" represent, perhaps, as fine an achievement as distinguishes Mr. Woodberry's work. It would, indeed, be difficult to surpass them in American literature of to-day in strength, passion, or ideality :

I

England, I stand on thy imperial ground,
 Not all a stranger ; as thy bugles blow,
 I feel within my blood old battles flow —
 The blood whose ancient founts in thee are found.
 Still surging dark against the Christian bound
 Wide Islam presses ; well its peoples know
 Thy heights that watch them wandering below ;
 I think how Lucknow heard their gathering sound.
 I turn, and meet the cruel, turbanned face.
 England, 't is sweet to be so much thy son !
 I feel the conqueror in my blood and race ;
 Last night Trafalgar awed me, and to-day
 Gibraltar wakened ; hark, thy evening gun
 Startles the desert over Africa !

II

Thou art the rock of empire, set mid-seas
 Between the East and West, that God has built ;
 Advance thy Roman borders where thou wilt,
 While run thy armies true with His decrees.

Law, justice, liberty — great gifts are these ;
Watch that they spread where English blood is spilt,
Lest, mixed and sullied with his country's guilt,
The soldier's life-stream flow, and Heaven displease !
Two swords there are : one naked, apt to smite,
Thy blade of war; and, battle-storied, one
Rejoices in the sheath, and hides from light.
American I am ; would wars were done !
Now westward, look, my country bids good-night —
Peace to the world from ports without a gun !

Whether in his travels or in the quiet of his own contemplation, the emphasis of Mr. Woodberry's thought is upon the noble, the essential, the beautiful. Although not a strongly creative poet in form, he is a highly cultivated poet, and hands on the nobler traditions of art; and if now and then he wraps another's "singing robe" about him, it is but an external vesture, leaving the soul of his thought unchanged.

XI

FREDERIC LAWRENCE KNOWLES

M R. FREDERIC LAWRENCE KNOWLES is one of the younger poets about whose work there is no veneer. This is not to imply that it lacks finish, but rather that the foundation is genuine; it reflects its native grain, and not an overlaid polish. One feels back of the work the probity and directness that underlie all soundly conditioned literature; for while Mr. Knowles has the poet's passion for the beauties of the art he essays, the primary value is always in that to be conveyed rather than in the medium of transmission.

This sincerity is at once Mr. Knowles' distinction and his danger. He is so manifestly in earnest that one feels at times in his work a certain lack of the imaginative leaven which should lighten the most serious thought; to put it in a word, there is often an over-strenuous note in his poetry; but were it put to a choice between this mood and the honeyed

artificialities to which one is often treated, there would be no hesitancy in choosing the former, for

The poet is not fed on sweets ;
Daily his own heart he eats,—

not morbidly, but finding within his own spirit daily manna, and living by this aliment and not by the mere nectar of things. Everything in life bestows this manna and daily renews it; and the poet is he who assimilates and transmutes it to personal needs until his thought is fed from his own heart as in Emerson's couplet.

This is Mr. Knowles' ideal of growth, evidenced by the eager interest and open sympathy with which he seeks from life its elements of truth, and from experience its developing properties. It is, of course, an ideal beyond his present attainment, probably beyond his ultimate attainment, gauged by absolute standards, for the "elements of truth" are hardly to be separated from life by one magnet. They are variously polarized, and though one may possess the divining wand that shall disclose the nature and place of certain of them, there is no wand polarized for all; but it is the poet's part to pass that magnet of truth which is his by nature over the field of life, that it may

attract therefrom its range of affinities, and this Mr. Knowles is doing.

Before taking up his later work, however, we may glance at his matin songs, *On Life's Stairway*, which have many indicative notes worthy of consideration. This volume, that called forth from John Burroughs, Richard Henry Stoddard, Joaquin Miller, and others, such hearty commendation, has an individuality that makes itself felt. First, perhaps, one notes its spontaneity and the evident love of song that is its primal impulse. The fancy is fresh and sprightly, not having yet thought's heavier freight; the optimism is robust, the loyalty to one's own time impassioned and absolute, and the democracy and Americanism distinguishing it are of the commendable, if somewhat grandiloquent, type belonging to youthful patriotism. Another feature of Mr. Knowles' work, manifest in both volumes, is that its inspiration is from life rather than nature, which is refreshing in view of the fact that the reverse obtains with most of the younger poets. When, however, he comes to this theme, it is with a lightness of touch and a pleasant charm of mood that give to the few poems of this subject an airy delicacy and an unpremeditated note, as in these lines;



Nature, in thy largess, grant
I may be thy confidant !

• • • •
Show me how dry branches throw
Such blue shadows on the snow ;
Tell me how the wind can fare
On his unseen feet of air ;
Show me how the spider's loom
Weaves the fabric from her womb ;
Lead me to those brooks of morn
Where a woman's laugh is born ;
Let me taste the sap that flows
Through the blushes of a rose, —
Yea, and drain the blood which runs
From the heart of dying suns ;
Teach me how the butterfly
Guessed at immortality ;
Let me follow up the track
Of Love's deathless zodiac
Where Joy climbs among the spheres
Circled by her moon of tears.

In his poems upon love, Mr. Knowles touches some of his truest and surest notes; those in the second volume have a broader and more sympathetic appeal, and yet have not lost the confessional note which alone gives value to the subject. They are not invariably of a more inspired touch than are several in the first collection, such as "Lost Knowledge," "A Song for Simplicity," and "Love's Prayer;" now and again they combine some newly minted phrase

flashing with unsullied lustre, with such as have passed from hand to hand in the dulling commerce of language; but it is perhaps too much to demand that all fancies shall be newly stamped with the die of imagination. One of Mr. Knowles' strongest poems from the group in question is entitled "Love's World;" but for greater brevity I shall quote instead these charming lines which introduce the collection called *Love Triumphant*:

Helen's lips are drifting dust,
Ilion is consumed with rust;
All the galleons of Greece
Drink the ocean's dreamless peace;
Lost was Solomon's purple show
Restless centuries ago;
Stately empires wax and wane —
Babylon, Barbary and Spain —
Only one thing, undefaced,
Lasts, though all the worlds lie waste
And the heavens are overturned.
— Dea., how long ago we learned !

There 's a sight that blinds the sun,
Sound that lives when sounds are done,
Music that rebukes the birds,
Language lovelier than words,
Hue and scent that shame the rose,
Wine no earthly vineyard knows,
Silence stiller than the shore
Swept by Charon's stealthy oar,

Ocean more divinely free
Than Pacific's boundless sea,—
Ye who love have learned it true.
— Dear, how long ago we knew !

Of this group, however, it is in the sonnet, "If Love Were Jester at the Court of Death," that Mr. Knowles' most genuine inspiration has visited him.

The conception of the sonnet is unique, and its opening line of epigrammatic force and suggestiveness :

If Love were jester at the court of Death,
And Death the king of all, still would I pray,
" For me the motley and the bauble, yea,
Though all be vanity, as the Preacher saith,
The mirth of love be mine for one brief breath ! "
Then would I kneel the monarch to obey,
And kiss that pale hand, should it spare or slay ;
Since I have tasted love, what mattereth !
But if, dear God ! this heart be dry as sand,
And cold as Charon's palm holding Hell's toll,
How worse ! how worse ! Scorch it with sorrow's brand !
Haply, though dead to joy, 't would feel *that* coal ;
Better a cross and nails through either hand,
Than Pilate's palace and a frozen soul !

Here are originality, strength, and white heat of feeling, though the sestett is less artistic than the octave, which holds the creative beauty of the sonnet.

Of the lyrical poems in the second volume there are many clear of tone, having not only a pure, enunciative quality musically, but also color and picturesqueness, as that beginning:

With all his purple spoils upon him
Creeps back the plunderer Sea,

with its succession of pictures such as these:

O bandit, with the white-plumed horsemen,
Raiding a thousand shores,
Thy coffers crammed with spars and anchors
And wave-defeated oars !

Admirable phrasing is that of "wave-defeated oars"! But before taking up the more strenuous side of his work, there is another lyric rich in melody and emotion,—a lyric in which one feels the under-current of passion. It is named, "A Song of Desire":

Thou dreamer with the million moods,
Of restless heart like me,
Lay thy white hands against my breast
And cool its pain, O Sea !

O wanderer of the unseen paths,
Restless of heart as I,
Blow hither from thy caves of blue,
Wind of the healing sky!

O treader of the fiery way,
With passionate heart like mine,
Hold to my lips thy healthful cup
Brimmed with its blood-red wine !

O countless watchers of the night,
 Of sleepless heart like me,
Pour your white beauty in my soul,
 Till I grow calm as ye !

O sea, O sun, O wind and stars,
 (O hungry heart that longs !)
Feed my starved lips with life, with love,
 And touch my tongue with songs !

Mr. Knowles is a modern of the moderns, and his Whitmanesque conviction that "we tally all antecedents;" that "we are the scald, the oracle, the monk, and the knight;" that "we easily include them and more," — finds expression in each of his volumes, in poems ranging from boyish fustian, at which he would now smile, to the noble lines of "Veritas" and other poems in the later work. There are certain subjects that hold within them percussion powder ready to explode at the touch of a thought, — subjects which, to one's own peculiar temperament, seem to be provocative of a fulminant outburst whenever one collides with them, and this is such an one to Mr. Knowles. However, it is well to be shaken up occasionally by such detonating lines as these:

We have sonnets enough, and songs enough,
 And ballads enough, God knows !
But what we need is that cosmic stuff
 Whence primitive feeling glows,

Grown, organized to the needs of rhyme
Through the old instinctive laws,
With a meaning broad as the boughs of time
And deep as the roots of cause.

It is passion and power that we need to-day,
We have grace and taste full store ;
We need a man who will say his say
With a strength unguessed before : —

• • • • •
Whose lines shall glow like molten steel
From being forged in his soul,
Till the very anvil shall burn to feel
The breath of the quenchless coal !

Your dainty wordsters may cry “Uncouth !”
As they shrink from his bellows’ glow ;
But the fire he fans is immortal youth,
And how should the bloodless know !

One will hardly deny that this is sound doctrine, as are the stanzas necessarily omitted, which trace the qualifications of the bard of to-day. Assuredly one touches the question of questions when he seeks the cause for the apparent waning of poetic inspiration in our own time. There is certainly no wane in the diffusion of the poetic impulse ; but the poet who is answering the great questions of the age, speaking the indicative words of the future, — to quote Mr. Knowles,

A voice whose sagas shall live with God
When the lyres of earth are rust, —

is hardly being heard at the present hour. There are voices and voices which proclaim truths, but the voice that enunciates Truth in its larger utterance — as it is spoken, for example, in the words of Browning — seems not to find expression in our day. From this the impression has come to prevail that Art is choking virility of utterance, and that a wholly new order of song must grow from newer needs, — song that shall express our national masculinity, our robust democracy, our enlarged patriotism, and our sometimes bumptious Americanism ; that labor must have its definite poet, and the "hymn to the workman's God" contain some different note from that hitherto chanted. To put it in Mr. Knowles' stirring words from another poem :

In the ink of our sweat we will find it yet,
The song that is fit for men !

And the woodsman he shall sing it,
And his axe shall mark the time ;
And the bearded lips of the boatman
While his oarblades fall in rhyme ;

And the man with his fist on the throttle,
And the man with his foot on the brake,
And the man who will scoff at danger
And die for a comrade's sake ;

And the Hand that wrought the Vision
With prairie and peak and stream
Shall guide the hand of the workman
And help him to trace his dream! —

Till the rugged lines grow perfect,
And round to a faultless whole;
For the West will have found her singer
When her singer has found his soul.

These are fine, swinging strophes, proclaiming the modern ideal from Whitman to Kipling that "the song that is fit for men" must have in it some robust timbre, some resonant fibre, unheard before; that a sturdier race of bards must arise, "sprung from the toilers at the bench and plough," — that, in fine, the new America must have a more orotund voice to sing her needs.

This has a convincing plausibility on the face of it; but do the facts bear it out, — are virility and democracy and modernity the essential elements of the "song that is fit for men"? If so, then Whitman, who is the apogee of the elemental and democratic, or Kipling, whose tunes blare in one's ears like the horns of a band, and whose themes are aggressively of the day and hour, would be the ideal types of the new-day poet, and we should find the sturdy laborer and the common folk in

general coming to these sources for refreshment, inspiration, and aid in tracing their dreams; but, on the contrary, Whitman, by a frequent paradox of letters, is a poet for the most cultivated and deeply reflective minds. Only such can understand and embrace his universality, and, on the poetic side, enjoy his splendid diction and the wave-like sweep of his rhythms. His formlessness, which was reactive that he might come the nearer to the common heart, is one of the chief barriers that prevent this contact. The unlettered nature, more than all others, demands the ordered symmetry of rhythm as a focus and aid to thought; it demands elemental beauties as well as truths, and hence not only is Whitman ruled out by his own measure, but Kipling also, for again it needs the broadly cultivated mind to take at his true and at his relative value a poet like Kipling. The common mind might be familiar with some poem of occasion, the English laborer might be found singing "*Tommy Atkins*"; but Kipling's finer shadings would escape in the beat of his galloping tunes and in the touch-and-go of his subjects.

If, then, Kipling, who outmoderns the moderns in singing what is presumably a song fit for men, and if Whitman, who is as robustly, demo-

critically American as a poet can well be, and trumpeting ever that note,—if these poets do not reach the typical man, if they are not the ones to whom the stalwart laborer comes, or the busy man of affairs, there must be a need anterior to that of which they sing; song must spell something else besides virility, democracy, achievement. It evidently is not the men who *do*, not the men who *act*, that write "the song of fact" for the laborer and the great class of our strong, sincere, common folk. They do not want the song of fact more than do we; they have no other dream to trace than have we. They want the primal things,—love, hope, beauty, the transforming ideal; they want the carbon of their daily experience turned to the crystal; and for this they go to a poet like Burns, who spoke the universal tongue, who took the common ideals and touched them simply, tenderly, not strenuously, to a new form at the will of his fancy. You shall find the boatman or the woodsman knowing his Burns, often his Shakespeare, for he is quick to grasp the human element, or his Scott, for he loves romance, when the strident cry of a Kipling, or of a modern idealist singing of democracy, or of the newer needs of the laborer himself, will be wholly lost on him; and hence this note

that one is meeting so often in the recent poets seems to me to be a false and superfluous one.

The "song that is fit for men" is *any* song that has the essence of truth and beauty in it, and no other *is* fit for men, no matter where sung. We have not evolved a new *genus homo* by our conquest of arms; our democracy is not changing human nature; we need virility in song, as Mr. Knowles has said in the earlier poem quoted; we need that "cosmic stuff whence primitive feeling glows," but we need beauty and spirituality to shape it. Poetry must minister first of all to the inner life. Tennyson and Browning were not concerned with matters of empire, or the passing issues of the day; they were occupied with the essential things,—things of humanity and of the soul, that shall outlast empire, democracy, or time. Heaven forefend that our bards shall spring from a race

Unkempt, athletic, rude,
Rough as the prairies, tameless as the sea,

rather let them spring from the very ripest, richest-natured class of men and women, not servile to custom, but having the breadth of vision, the poise, the fine and harmonious development that flowers from the highest

cultivation, whether in the schools or in life. It did not emasculate the work of Browning or Milton or Goethe, nor of our own Lowell, or many another, that he had the most profound enrichment that education and traditional culture could give him. Originality is not crushed by cultivation, nor will native impulse go far without it. The need is of a poet who shall divine the underlying harmonies of life, who shall stimulate and develop the higher nature, and disclose the alchemizing truth that shall transmute the gross ore of experience into the fine metal of character and spiritual beauty,—such a poet as Mr. Knowles himself may become when his idealism shall have taken on that inner sight of the mystic which now he shows so definitely in certain phases of his work.

He is readier in general to see life's benign face than its malign one, even though shapen by pain and guilt; and this brings us to the group of poems from his new volume, *Love Triumphant*, turning upon Sin and Remorse, and presenting an element of human passion at once the most provocative of degradation and the most susceptible of spiritual elevation.

Whitman approached this theme from the cosmic standpoint as he would approach any of

the universalities of life, not specifically from the spiritual side, in its destiny-shaping effects. It is from this side that Mr. Knowles essays its consideration, presenting chiefly the reactive, retributive phase of guilt,—the sudden spiritual isolation of the soul that has sinned, as if the golden doors that opened on the world had transformed to iron bars imprisoning the soul within its cell of memory. This sense of detachment, of having unwittingly plucked oneself from the flowering beauty of life, of being irrevocably cut off from sap and stem, which is the first and most palpable phase of guilt, predominates in several of the poems. To consider it first, then, the stanzas called "Lost" may be cited as illustrative:

Night scattered gold-dust in the eyes of Earth,
My heart was blinded by the excess of stars
As, filled with youth and joy, I kept the Way.

The solitary and unweaponed Sun
Slew all the hosts of darkness with a smile,
And it was Dawn. And still I kept the Way.

The winds, those hounds that only God can leash,
Bayed on my track, and made the morning wild
With loud confusion, but I kept the Way.

The hours climbed high. Peace, where the zenith broods,
Fell, a blue feather from the wings of Heav'n.
Lo ! it was Noon. And still I kept the Way.

At length one met me as my footsteps flagged,—
Within her eyes oblivion, on her lips
Delirious dreams — and I forgot the Way.

And still we wander — who knows whitherward,
Our sandals torn, in either face despair,
Passion burnt out — God ! I have lost the Way !

Here is strong and vivid imagery, especially in the third stanza,

The winds, those hounds that only God can leash,

which is a bold and fine stroke not merely in its metaphorical phrasing, but as a symbol of human passions. The entire poem is a vivid piece of symbolism ; it is, however, but one phase of the subject, and in "One Woman" and "Sin's Foliage" one comes again face to face with the same phase, with that terrible memory-haunted eidolon, the visage of one's own defaced soul. It is in the poem "Betrayed" that a truer perspective begins to be manifest, of which one stanza —

Yet were his hands and conscience clean ;
Some monstrous Folly rose unseen
To teach him crimes he could not mean —

introduces a truth that strikes deeper than the mere spell of impulse, — a truth that suggests the mystery of election in crime : whether one

is wholly responsible for the choice which in a moment becomes the pivotal event of his destiny, or whether what Maeterlinck has called the "conniving voices that we cherish at the depths of us" summoned the event, and impelled him inevitably toward its hazard; and, further, whether these voices are not often the commissioned voices, calling one thus to arouse from the somnolence of his soul. On the morrow of the hour in which he has

. . . fallen from Heav'n to Hell
In one mad moment's fateful spell,

and finds himself in the isolation of his own spirit,—consciousness will awaken, life will be perceived, sympathy will be born, and Pain, with the daily transfiguring face, will companion him, until in the years he again meet Love and the other fair shapes of his destiny. Since no one remains in the hell to which he has fallen, but by his own choosing, Life rebukes the Art that leaves this sense of finality; for the hour of tragedy is rather the beginning than the end, and often so manifestly the birth of the soul into spiritual consciousness that it may well seem that apparent sin is the mere agency of the higher forces of the nature, the shock that displaces ignorance

and smug self-complacency and both humanizes and deifies the soul.

In other poems of the group, however, the developing power of sin, and the remedial forces which it evokes for the renewal of the nature, are dwelt upon, so that the poems are redeemed at the last from the impression of hopeless finality which obtained in the earlier ones.

Few of the younger poets have a more vital and personal conviction of spiritual things than Mr. Knowles, and its evolution is interesting to note. There is abundant evidence in his earlier verse that he was bred after the strictest letter of the law; but while his faith was "fixed to form," it was seeking "centre everywhere," and the later volume widens to an encompassing view worthy the vision of a poet,—the view that finds nothing impervious to the irradiation of spirit. It is variously sung, but most nobly, perhaps, in the following poem:

In buds upon some Aaron's rod
The childlike ancient saw his God ;
Less credulous, more believing, we
Read in the grass — Divinity.

From Horeb's bush the Presence spoke
To earlier faiths and simpler folk ;
But now each bush that sweeps our fence
Flames with the awful Immanence !

To old Zacchæus in his tree
What mattered leaves and botany?
His sycamore was but a seat
Whence he could watch that hallowed street.

But now to us each elm and pine
Is vibrant with the Voice divine,
Not only from but in the bough
Our larger creed beholds Him now.

To the true faith, bark, sap and stem
Are wonderful as Bethlehem ;
No hill nor brook nor field nor herd
But mangers the incarnate Word !

• • • • •
Again we touch the healing hem
In Nazareth or Jerusalem ;
We trace again those faultless years ;
The cross commands our wondering tears.

Yet if to us the Spirit writes
On Morning's manuscript and Night's,
In gospels of the growing grain,
Epistles of the pond and plain,

In stars, in atoms, as they roll
Each tireless round its occult pole,
In wing and worm and fin and fleece,
In the wise soil's surpassing peace,—

Thrice ingrate he whose only look
Is backward focused on the Book,
Neglectful what the Presence saith,
Though He be near as blood and breath !

The only atheist is one
Who hears no voice in wind or sun,
Believer in some primal curse,
Deaf in God's loving universe !

Mr. Knowles has not embraced the diffusive faith that has no faith to stay it, but is endeavoring to read the newer meaning into the older truths, which is the present-day office of singer and seer. In the matter of personal valor, of optimistic, intrepid mood, Mr. Knowles' work is altogether commendable. He awaits with buoyant cheer what lies beyond the turn o' the road. His poem "Fear," from the first collection, was widely quoted at the time because of its heartening tone, and in his new volume, "A Challenge," "A Twofold Prayer," and many another sounds the same invincible note. "Laus Mortis" is a hymn to death holding within it the truer acceptation of that natural and therefore kindly change:

Nay, why should I fear Death,
Who gives us life, and in exchange takes breath?

He is like cordial Spring
That lifts above the soil each buried thing;

Like autumn, kind and brief—
The frost that chills the branches frees the leaf;

Like winter's stormy hours
That spread their fleece of snow to save the flowers.

The lordliest of all things,
Life lends us only feet, Death gives us wings.

Fearing no covert thrust,
Let me walk onward, armed in valiant trust;

Dreading no unseen knife,
Across Death's threshold step from life to life !

O all ye frightened folk,
Whether ye wear a crown or bear a yoke,

Laid in one equal bed,
When once your coverlet of grass is spread,

What daybreak need you fear? —
The Love will rule you there that guides you here !

Where Life, the sower, stands,
Scattering the ages from his swinging hands,

Thou waitest, Reaper lone,
Until the multitudinous grain hath grown.

Scythe-bearer, when Thy blade
Harvests my flesh, let me be unafraid.

God's husbandman thou art,
In His unwithering sheaves, O bind my heart !

Mr. Knowles' work is virile, earnest, individual, free from affectation or imitation; modern in spirit, recognizing the significance of to-day, and its part in the finer realization of to-morrow; sympathetic in feeling, and spiritual

in vision. Its limitations are such as may be trusted to time, being chiefly incident to the earnestness noted above, which now and again borders on didacticism. Excess of conviction is, however, a safer equipment for art than a philosophy already parting with its enthusiasms by the tempering of life, being more likely to undergo the shaping of experience without losing the vital part.

XII

ALICE BROWN

MISS ALICE BROWN has published but one volume of verse; but we live in feelings, not in titles on a cover, and it is possible to prove oneself a poet in one volume of verse, or in one poem thereof. When Miss Brown some years ago paid this tribute at the toll-gate of song by a small volume entitled *The Road to Castaly*, it created no inconsiderable comment among lovers of poetry, and there were not wanting those who saw in it as definite gifts as Miss Brown possesses in fiction; but despite the generous recognition which the collection won, she has not seen fit to follow it with others, and with the exception of occasional poems in the magazines, it remains the sole representation of this phase of her work. Yet within a range of seventy pages she has gathered a stronger group of poems than might be winnowed from several collections of some of those who cultivate verse more assiduously. Nor is this to declare that from cover to cover of her volume the inspired touch is

everywhere manifest; doubtless the seventy pages would have gained in strength by compression to fifty. It is, however, to declare that within this compass there is a true accomplishment, at which we shall look briefly.

First, then, the work has personality and magnetism, bringing one at once into sympathetic interchange with the writer. The feeling is not insulated by the art, but is imbued with all the warmth of speech; there are no "wires" but the live wires of vibrant words, conducting their current of impulse directly to the reader. One feels that Miss Brown has written verse not as a pleasant diversion, nor yet with painful self-scrutiny, but only when her nature demanded this form of expression, and hence the motive shapes the mechanism, rather than the reverse.

Miss Brown's poems are not primarily philosophical, not ethical to the degree of being moralistic; but they have a subtly pervasive spirituality, and in certain lyrics, such as "*Hora Christi*," a rare depth of religious emotion. They are records of moods: of the soul, of passing life, of the psychic side of death, of the mutability of love, of ecstatic surrender to nature, of loyalty to service,—in short, they are poems of the intuitions and sympathies,



and warm with personality. Perhaps the most buoyant note in the book is that in celebration of the joys of escape from town to country; from the thrall of paving-stones and chimney-pots to the indesecrate seclusion of the pines, where the springy pile of the woodland carpet gives forth a pungent odor to the tread; and where, in Miss Brown's delicate phrase,

the ferns waver, wakened by no wind
Save the green flickering of their blossomy mind.

To read Miss Brown's "Morning in Camp" is to take a vacation without stirring from one's armchair,—a vacation by a mountain lake engirt with pine forests, with one's tent pitched below the "spice-budded" firs and "shimmering birches," guarded by

. . . the mountain wall
Where the first potencies of dawning fall,

and within sight of the shore where

. . . the water laps the land,
Encircling her with charm of silvery sand;

and where one may lie at dawn in his "tent's white solitude," conscious of

. . . the rapt ecstatic birth
Renewed without: the mirrored sky and earth,
Married in beauty, consonant in speech,
And uttering bliss responsive each to each.

Miss Brown's rapt poems in celebration of nature range from the impassioned dignity of her stanzas picturing a "Sunrise on Mansfield Mountain" to fancies so delicate that they seem to be caught in gossamer meshes of song. The poems are somewhat inadaptable to quotation, as several of the best, such as "Wood-Longing," "Pan," and "Escape," are written in stanzas whose exuberant impulse carries them so far that they may not be excised midway without destroying a climax. Upon a first reading of some of these periods they give one an impression of being over-sustained; but the imagery is clear, and upon a second reading one is likely to catch the infection of the lines and be borne on with them to the reversal of his first judgment. "Wood-Longing" thrills with the passion of

. . . the earth
When all the ecstasy of myriad birth
Afflicts her with a rapturous shuddering,

and celebrating escape from the thraldom of books, it demands of the soul:

Spirit, what wilt thou dare,
Just to be one with earth and air?
To read the writing on the river bed,
And trace God's mystical mosaic overhead?

.

O incomunicable speech !
For he who reads a book may preach
A hundred sermons from its foolish rote
And rhyme reiterant on one dull note.
But he who spends an hour within the wood
Hath fed on fairy food ;
And who hath eaten of the forest fruit
Is ever mute.
Nothing may he reveal.
Nature hath set her seal
Of honor on anointed lips ;
And one who daring dips
His cup within her potent brew
Hath drunk of silence too.
What doth the robin say,
And what the martial jay ?
Who 'll swear the bluebird's lilt is all of love,
Or who translate the desolation of the dove ?
For even in the common speech
Of feathered fellows, each to each,
Abideth still the primal mystery,
The brooding past, the germ of life to be ;
And one poor weed, upspringing to the sun,
Breeds all creation's wonder, new begun.

"Sunrise on Mansfield Mountain," written in fine resonant pentameter, and building up stanza by stanza to the supreme climax of the dawn, is, as noted above, one of the finest achievements of Miss Brown's volume, but one that will least bear the severing of its passages from their place in the growing whole. It is

full of notable phrases, as that in the apostrophe,—

O changeless guardians ! O ye wizard firs !

• • • •
What breath may move ye, or what breeze invite
To odorous hot lendings of the heart? —

wherein the very pungency of the pine is infused into the words. But more adaptable to quotation in its compactness is the lyric entitled “Candlemas,” captivating in form and spontaneity, though no more felicitous in fancy or rhythm than many other of her nature poems :

O hearken, all ye little weeds
That lie beneath the snow,
(So low, dear hearts, in poverty so low !)
The sun hath risen for royal deeds,
A valiant wind the vanguard leads ;
Now quicken ye, lest unborn seeds
Before ye rise and blow.

O fury living things, adream
On winter’s drowsy breast,
(How rest ye there, how softly, safely rest !)
Arise and follow where a gleam
Of wizard gold unbinds the stream,
And all the woodland windings seem
With sweet expectancy blest.

My birds, come back ! the hollow sky
 Is weary for your note.

(Sweet-throat, come back ! O liquid, mellow throat !)
 Ere May's soft minions hereward fly,
 Shame on ye, laggards, to deny
 The brooding breast, the sun-bright eye,
 The tawny, shining coat !

Mr. Archer, in his *Poets of the Younger Generation*, quotes this poem as the gem of Miss Brown's collection ; and it certainly is a charming lyric, but not more so to my thinking than several of an entirely different nature, which will also in time's trial by fire remain the true coin. It needs a somewhat broader and deeper term, however, than "charming" to qualify such poems as "Hora Christi," "On Pilgrimage," "Seaward Bound," "The Return," "The Message," "The Slanderer," "Lethe," and "In Extremis," in which life speaks a word charged with more vital significance. "On Pilgrimage" (A. D. 1250) reveals an art that is above praise. With only the simplest words Miss Brown has infused into this poem the very essence of pain, of numb, bewildered hopelessness. One feels it as a palpable atmosphere :

My love hath turned her to another mate.

(O grief too strange for tears !)
 So must I make the barren earth my home ;
 So do I still on feeble questing roam,

An outcast from mine own unfriending gate,
Through the wan years.

My love hath rid her of my patient heart.
(Wake not, O frozen breast !)

Yet still there's one to pour her oil and wine,
And all life's banquet counteth most divine.
O Thou, Who also hadst in joy no part,
Give me Thy rest !

What strength have I to cleanse Thy stolen tomb,
For Christendom's release ?
Naked, at last, of hope and trust am I,
Too weak to sue for human charity.
A beggar to Thy holy shrine I come.
Grant me but peace !

And now in contrast with these exquisitely pathetic lines, to show that the tragic side of life is not alone interpreted in Miss Brown's verse, and that she sees the temperamental contrasts of passion, witness the cavalier parting of this "West-Country Lover," to whom the light o' love is too fatuous a gleam to risk one's way in following. The dash and spirit of these lines are worthy a seventeenth-century gallant :

Then, lady, at last thou art sick of my sighing.
Good-bye !

So long as I sue, thou wilt still be denying?
Good-bye !

Ah, well ! shall I vow then to serve thee forever,
And swear no unkindness our kinship can sever?
Nay, nay, dear my lass ! here's an end of endeavor.
Good-bye !

Yet let no sweet ruth for my misery grieve thee.

Good-bye !

The man who has loved knows as well how to leave thee.

Good-bye !

The gorse is enkindled, there 's bloom on the heather,

And love is my joy, but so too is fair weather ;

I still ride abroad, though we ride not together.

Good-bye !

My horse is my mate ; let the wind be my master.

Good-bye !

Though Care may pursue, yet my hound follows faster.

Good-bye !

The red deer 's a-tremble in coverts unbroken.

He hears the hoof-thunder ; he scents the death-token.

Shall I mope at home, under vows never spoken ?

Good-bye !

The brown earth 's my book, and I ride forth to read it.

Good-bye !

The stream runneth fast, but my will shall outspeed it.

Good-bye !

I love thee, dear lass, but I hate the hag Sorrow.

As sun follows rain, and to-night has its morrow,

So I 'll taste of joy, though I steal, beg, or borrow !

Good-bye !

This is as admirable a bit of nonchalance as
Wither's,

Shall I, wasting in despair,
Die because a woman 's fair?

or Suckling's,

Why so pale and wan, fond lover,
Prithee, why so pale?

with its salient advice to the languishing adorer.

Miss Brown's small volume is by no means lacking in variety, either in theme or form; it is full of spontaneous music, rarely forcing the note in any lyric inspiration. In the sonnet she is less at ease: here one feels the effort, the mechanism; but only four sonnets are included in the volume, which shows her to be a true critic. There are certain poems that might, perhaps, with equal advantage have been eliminated, such as the over-musical numbers to Dian and Endymion; but in the main, Miss Brown has done her own blue-pencil-lining, and *The Road to Castaly*, as stated in the beginning, maintains a fine and even grade of workmanship.

In such poems as are touched to tenderness and reverence, half with the sweetness and half with the pain of life, Miss Brown makes her truest appeal. The fine ideality, the spiritual fealty of her nature, as shown in her work, always relates itself to one on the human side. It is not the fealty that shames a weaker nature by its rigid steadfastness, but that in which one sees his own wavering strife reflected. Her lines called "The Artisan,"¹

¹ Copyright, 1903, by Harper and Brothers.

written since the publication of her volume, are instinct with such feeling as comment would profane. One can but feel, with a quick pang of sympathy, that he, too, makes the appeal:

O God, my master God, look down and see
If I am making what Thou wouldest of me.
Fain might I lift my hands up in the air
From the defiant passion of my prayer ;
Yet here they grope on this cold altar stone,
Graving the words I think I should make known.
Mine eyes are Thine. Yea, let me not forget,
Lest with unstaunched tears I leave them wet,
Dimming their faithful power, till they not see
Some small, plain task that might be done for Thee.
My feet, that ache for paths of flowery bloom,
Halt steadfast in the straitness of this room.
Though they may never be on errands sent,
Here shall they stay, and wait Thy full content.
And my poor heart, that doth so crave for peace,
Shall beat until Thou bid its beating cease.
So, Thou dear master God, look down and see
Whether I do Thy bidding heedfully.

These lines well illustrate the fact that true emotion is not literary nor self-observant, and does not cast about for some rare image in which to enshrine itself. Here is the simplest Saxon, and wholly without ornament, yet who could be unconscious of the heart-beat of life in the words? In her poem, "In Extremis," one is moved by the same intensity of feeling

expressed in the litany imploring deliverance from fear.

Of the more purely devotional poems, " Hora Christi " is perhaps the most reverent, and instinct with delicate simplicity. It is a song of the spirit, interpreting a mood whose springs are deep in the pain of life, but whose hidden wells have turned to sweetness and healing. It is not philosophically penetrative, but a tender, beautiful song warm with sincerity of feeling :

Sweet is the time for joyous folk

Of gifts and minstrelsy ;

Yet I, O lowly-hearted One,

Crave but Thy company.

On lonesome road, beset with dread,

My questing lies afar.

I have no light, save in the east

The gleaming of Thy star.

In cloistered aisles they keep to-day

Thy feast, O living Lord !

With pomp of banner, pride of song,

And stately sounding word.

Mute stand the kings of power and place,

While priests of holy mind

Dispense Thy blessed heritage

Of peace to all mankind.

I know a spot where budless twigs

Are bare above the snow,

And where sweet winter-loving birds

Flit softly to and fro ;

There with the sun for altar-fire,
The earth for kneeling-place,
The gentle air for chorister,
Will I adore Thy face.

Loud, underneath the great blue sky,
My heart shall pæan sing,
The gold and myrrh of meekest love
Mine only offering.
Bliss of Thy birth shall quicken me ;
And for Thy pain and dole
Tears are but vain, so I will keep
The silence of the soul.

In glancing over *The Road to Castaly*, one notes many poems that might perhaps have represented it better than those chosen, such as "The Return," "The Unseen Fellowship," "Mariners," "Forewarned," and "Seaward Bound;" but sufficient have been cited to show the quality of the volume and the sympathetic touch which Miss Brown possesses. Her nature poems range from the most exuberant fancy to a Keats-like richness and ripeness of phrase; and her miscellaneous verse from the tender, reverential note of the lyric last quoted to the trenchant scathing lines of "The Slanderer." It is, in brief, such work as combines feeling and distinction, and leaves one spiritually farther on his way than it found him.

XIII

RICHARD BURTON

ABOUT a decade ago there came from the press a demure little book clad soberly in Quaker garb, and hight gravely and mysteriously, *Dumb In June*. The title alone would have piqued one's curiosity as to the contents of the volume, but the name of the author, Richard Burton, was already known from magazine association with most of the songs in the newly published collection, and also as literary editor of the "Hartford Courant," whence his well-considered criticisms were coming to be quoted.

There was, then, a circle of initiates into whose hands *Dumb In June* soon made its way, and quite as unerringly, in most cases, to their hearts, and certain of these will tell you that *Dumb In June* still represents him most adequately; that it has a buoyancy and lyric joy such as less often distinguishes his later work; and this point is well taken from the consideration of magnetic touch and disillu-

sioned fancy; but is it quite reasonable to demand that "the earth and every common sight" shall continue to be "apparelled in celestial light" to the eyes of the poet when the years have brought the sober coloring to our own? that Art shall be winged with the glory and the dream when Life's wings droop to the dust? Would it be the truest art that should communicate only this impulse? Mr. Burton has not thought so: he has set himself to incorporate, in the life that he touches, the glory and the dream; to lift the weight, if ever so little, from the laden wings, and he uses his gifts to that end.

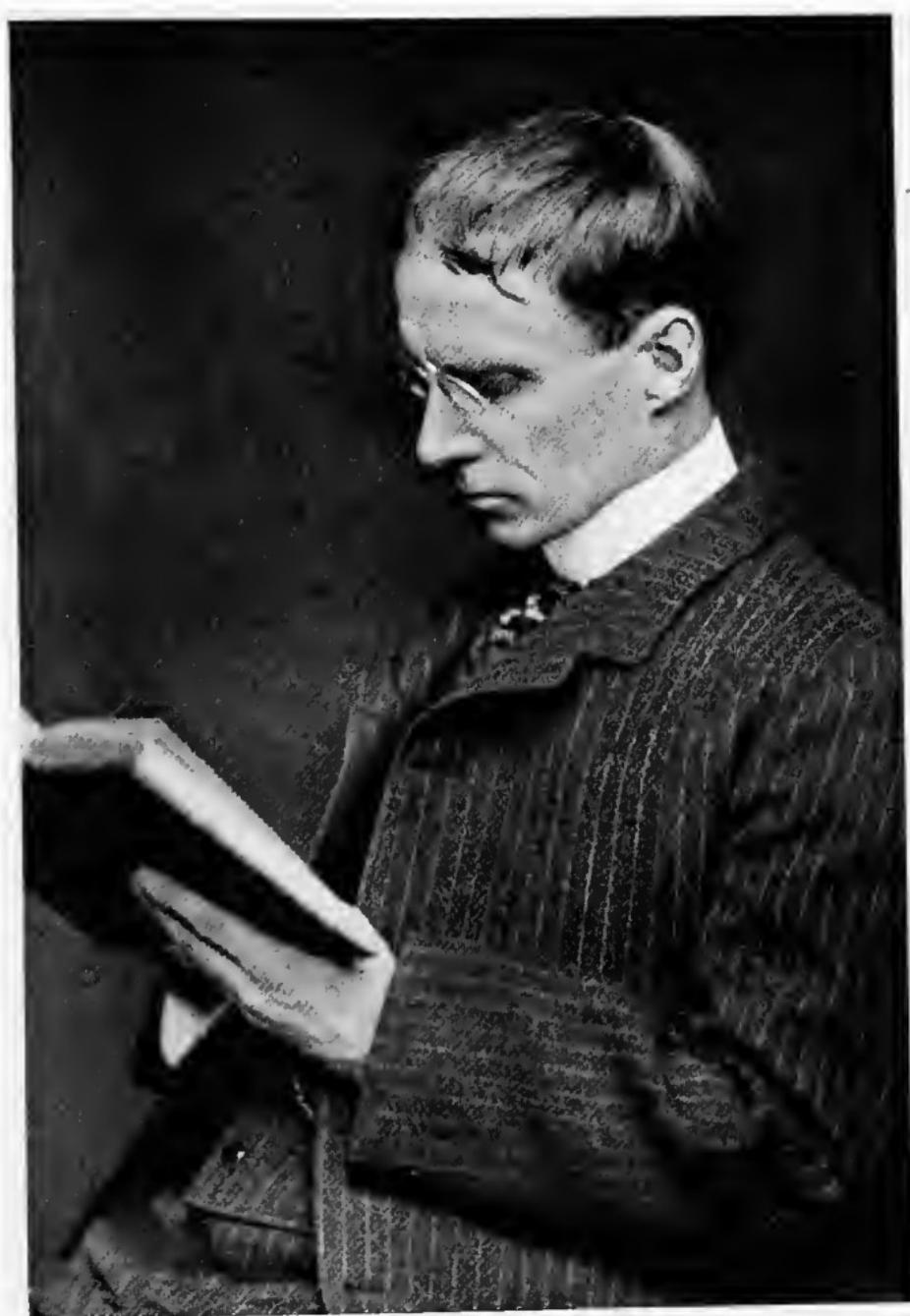
This is not an ideal that can embody itself in lightsome, dawn-fresh songs, as those that came, unsullied of pain, inviolate in hope, from out his nature-taught years; but it is an ideal for which one should barter, if need be, the mere lyric joy of that earlier time. To divine the dumb emotion, the unexpectant desire, of the man of the streets, and to become his interpreter, is a nobler achievement than to catch in delicate fancies the airiest thoughts of Pan. The poet who remains merely the voice of the wood-god, or the voice of the mystic, or the voice of the scholar dreaming and aloof, may float a song over the treetops, but it will not be known at the hearth, which is the final

test. Not to anticipate Mr. Burton's later ideal, however, let us return to *Dumb In June* and go with him upon the way of nature, unshadowed and elate.

It is interesting to note, in studying the formative time of many poets, that nature is the first mistress of their vows, and a less capricious one than they shall find again; hence their fealty to her and their ardor of surrender. Life has not yet come by, and paused to whisper the one word that shall become the logos of the soul; truth is still in the cosmos, the absolute, and one despairs of reducing it to the relative as he might of detaching a pencil of light from the rays of the sun. Nature alone represents the evolved intelligence, the harmony, the soul of the cosmos, and its ideal made real in law; where, then, shall one begin his quest for truth more fittingly than at the gate of nature, where Beauty is the portress and Beauty is the guide?

Mr. Burton feels the vitality, the personality, of objects in the outer world. There is no such thing in his conception as inert matter; it is all pulsing with life and sensibility. To him May is a

Sweet comer
With the mood of a love-plighted lass,



and henceforth we picture her as coming blithely by with flower-filled hands. This glimpsing of the May is from one of Mr. Burton's later songs, "The Quest of Summer,"—a poem full of color and atmosphere. After deplored the spring's withholding, it thrills to this note of exultation:

But it came,
In a garment of sensitive flame
In the west, and a royal blue sky overhead,
With exuberant breath and the bloom of all things
Having wonders and wings,
Being risen elate from the dead.
Yea, it came with a flush
Of pied flowers, and a turbulent rush
Of spring-loosened waters, and an odorous hush
At nightfall,— and then I was glad
With the gladness of one who for militant months
has been sad.

The very breath of spring is in this; one inhales it as he would a quickening aroma; it thrills him with the sensuous delight in the color, the perfume, the warmth, of the expanding air; and what delicate feeling for the atmospheric value of words is that which condenses a May twilight into "an odorous hush at nightfall." The words "odorous hush," in this connection, have drawn together by magnetic attraction; substitute for them their apparent equivalents,

"perfumed silence," "fragrant quiet," and the atmosphere has evaporated as breath from a glass; but an "odorous hush" conveys the sense of that suspended hour of a spring twilight when day pauses as if hearkening, and silence falls palpably around,—that spiritual hour when the flowers offer up their evening sacrifice at the coming of the dew.

Apropos of the feeling for words and their niceties of distinction as infusing what we term atmosphere into description, it may be said in passing that while Mr. Burton's sense of these values which is so keen in his prose does not always stand him in equal stead in his poetry, it is seldom lacking in his songs of nature.

One may dip into the out-of-door verse at random and come away with a picture; witness this "*Meadow Fancy*":

In the meadows yonder the wingéd wind
Makes billows along the grain;

With their sequence swift they bring to mind
The swash of the open main,

Till I smell the pungent brine, and hear —

Mine eyes grown dim — the cry
Of the sailor lads, and feel vague fear
Of the storm-wrack in the sky.

While the metaphorical idea in these strophes is not new, they record with freehand strokes

one of those suddenly suggestive moods that nature assumes, one of the swift similitudes she flashes before us as with conscious delight. Mr. Burton's nature-outlook is all open-air vision; no office desk looms darkly behind it, as is sometimes the case in his other verse. It is the sort of inspiration that descends upon one when he is afoot with his vision, roaming afield with beauty. A leaf torn hastily from a notebook serves to catch the fleeting spell; magnetism tips the pencil; and ink and type, those dread non-conductors of impulse, cannot retard or neutralize its current. This is, in a word, the charm that rests upon the little volume, *Dumb In June*, in its various subjects. It would be idle to assert that it is as strong work as Mr. Burton has done; but it is vivid and magnetic, and touched but lightly with the *weltschmerz* which life is sure to cast upon maturer work. There is pain, but it is merely artist-pain, in the ode that gives its name to the collection.

Among the few love poems in Mr. Burton's first volume, "The Awakening" is one of the truest in feeling; "Values" one of the blithest and daintiest; "Still Days and Stormy," reminiscent of Emily Dickinson in manner, one of the most delicate, catching in charming phrase

one of the unanalyzed moods of love. The earlier volume has also a captivating poem in the lighter vein, that sings itself into the memory by its lilting rhythm and graceful rhyme-scheme, as well as by its subject. It is the story of Shakespeare's going a-wooing "Across the Fields to Anne":

How often in the summer-tide,
His graver business set aside,
Has stripling Will, the thoughtful-eyed,
 As to the pipe of Pan,
Stepped blithesomely with lover's pride
 Across the fields to Anne.

It must have been a merry mile,
This summer stroll by hedge and stile,
With sweet foreknowledge all the while
 How sure the pathway ran
To dear delights of kiss and smile,
 Across the fields to Anne.

The silly sheep that graze to-day,
I wot, they let him go his way,
Nor once looked up, as who should say :
 "It is a seemly man."
For many lads went wooing aye
 Across the fields to Anne.

The oaks, they have a wiser look ;
Mayhap they whispered to the brook :
 "The world by him shall yet be shook,
 It is in nature's plan ;
Though now he fleets like any rook
 Across the fields to Anne."

And I am sure, that on some hour
Coqueting soft 'twixt sun and shower,
He stooped and broke a daisy-flower
With heart of tiny span,
And bore it as a lover's dower
Across the fields to Anne.

While from her cottage garden-bed
She plucked a jasmine's goodlihede,
To scent his jerkins brown instead ;
Now since that love began,
What luckier swain than he who sped
Across the fields to Anne?

Dumb In June has many foregleams of the wider vision which distinguishes Mr. Burton's present work, as shown in his sonnet upon the Christ-head by Angelo, in "Day Laborers," and in that noble poem, "Mortis Dignitas," imbued with reverence and touched with the simplicity of the verities. It must be appraised with the best work of his pen, not only for its theme, but for the direct and unadorned word and measure so integral with the thought:

Here lies a common man. His horny hands,
Crossed meekly as a maid's upon his breast,
Show marks of toil, and by his general dress
You judge him to have been an artisan.
Doubtless, could all his life be written out,
The story would not thrill nor start a tear ;
He worked, laughed, loved, and suffered in his time,

And now rests peacefully, with upturned face
Whose look belies all struggle in the past.
A homely tale ; yet, trust me, I have seen
The greatest of the earth go stately by,
While shouting multitudes beset the way,
With less of awe. The gap between a king
And me, a nameless gazer in the crowd,
Seemed not so wide as that which stretches now
Betwixt us two, this dead one and myself.
Untitled, dumb, and deedless, yet he is
Transfigured by a touch from out the skies
Until he wears, with all-unconscious grace,
The strange and sudden Dignity of Death.

This is a fitting transition to *Lyrics of Brotherhood*, which, together with his latest volume, presents the phase of Mr. Burton's work most representative of his feeling toward life. Any poet worthy of the name will come at last to a vision that only his eyes can see. Life will rise before him in a different semblance from that she presents to another; and if Beauty has lured him on, votary to that he might not wholly see, Life's yearning face wears no disguise, and, once having looked upon it with seeing eyes, it is an image not to be effaced. There are many who look and never see,—the majority, perhaps. Their eyes are holden by the shapes that cross the inner sight, by hope and memory and their own ideal. They shall see only by one of those

"flashes struck from midnight" of a personal tragedy—and often enough we gain our vision thus.

There is a penetrative insight, that of the social economist, for example, that may possess no ray of sympathetic divination. It may probe to the heart of a condition, correlate causes and tendencies and divine effects, all from a scientific motive as professional as the practice of law, and as keen and cold. One may even be an avowed philanthropist and never come in sight of a human soul, as will the poet who looks upon the individual not as a case to be classified and tabulated, but as one walking step to step with him, though more heavily, whom he may reach out and touch now and then with the quickening hand of sympathy, and whose load he may bear bewhiles on the journey.

Such a poet is Mr. Burton, whose nature is shapen to one image with his fellows. To him literature is not an entity to be weighed only in the scales of beauty by the balances of Flaubert; it is to-day's and to-morrow's speech. In his prose, especially, this directness is marked; but in his poems one feels rather the inner relation with their spirit, for the magnetism of touch is less communicative than in the more flexible medium of prose. What is communi-

cative, however, is the feeling that Mr. Burton is living at the heart of things where the fusion is taking place that makes us one. *Lyrics of Brotherhood* is a genuine clasp of hand to hand, nor is he dismayed by the grime of the hand, for the primal unities are primal sanctities to him. Longing, strife, defeat, achievement, are all interpreted to him of personal emotion, solvent in personal sympathy.

Lyrics of Brotherhood opens with a poem that redeems from odium one opprobrious symbol as old as time. It is that catch-penny epithet, "black sheep," that we bandy about with such flippancy, tossing it as loose change in a character appraisal and little recking what truth-valuation may lie behind it. It is good to feel that the impulse to redeem this symbol came to Mr. Burton and wrought so well within him, for "Black Sheep" is one of his truest inspirations in feeling and expression :

From their folded mates they wander far,
Their ways seem harsh and wild ;
They follow the beck of a baleful star,
Their paths are dream-beguiled.

Yet haply they sought but a wider range,
Some loftier mountain-slope,
And little recked of the country strange
Beyond the gates of hope.

And haply a bell with a luring call
Summoned their feet to tread
Midst the cruel rocks, where the deep pitfall
And the lurking snare are spread.

Maybe, in spite of their tameless days
Of outcast liberty,
They're sick at heart for the homely ways
Where their gathered brothers be.

And oft at night, when the plains fall dark
And the hills loom large and dim,
For the Shepherd's voice they mutely hark,
And their souls go out to him.

Meanwhile, "Black sheep! Black sheep!" we cry,
Safe in the inner fold;
And maybe they hear, and wonder why,
And marvel, out in the cold.

Throughout Mr. Burton's work there is a warm feeling for the simple tendernesses, the unblazoned heroisms of life; the homely joys, the homely valor, the unknown consecrations, the unconfessed aspirations,—in a word, for all that songless melody of the common soul whose note we do not catch in the public clamor. There is a tendency, however, in his later work that, from an artistic standpoint, is carried too far,—the tendency to analogize. Everything in life presents an analogy to him who is alert for it; and the habit of looking for analogies and

symbols and making poems thereon grows upon one with the fatal facility of punning, upon a punster. A symbol, or the subtler and more profound analysis that seeks the causal relation of dissimilar things, which we term analogy, must have the magic of revelation ; it must flash upon the mind some similitude unthought or unguessed. Emerson is the past-master of this symbolistic magic ; they bring him rubies, and they become to him souls, of

Friends to friends unknown :
Tides that should warm each neighboring life
Are locked in frozen stone.

Here is the eye of the revelator, for who, looking upon rubies, would have seen in them what Emerson saw, and yet what a truth bides at the heart of this symbol !

Mr. Burton has several analogies, such as "On the Line," "North Light," and "Black Sheep," quoted above, that are excellently wrought; indeed, it is not so much the manner in which the analogy is elaborated that one would criticise, as the frequently too-obvious nature of it.

The danger to a poet in dropping too often into analogy is that he will become a singer of effects, a watcher of manifestations, and for-

get to look for the gleam within himself and make it the light of his seeing. If poetry become too much a matter of observation, of report, vitality goes from it; for imagination is stultified and emotion quenched, and poetry at its best is a union of imagination and emotion. Mr. Burton's poems in the main escape this indictment, but their danger lies along this line. His perception of identities is so acute, his sympathy so catholic, that not only is nothing human alien to him, but there is nothing in which he cannot find a theme for poetry. For illustration, there is an imaginative beauty in the symbol of the homing bird, but its artistic value is lost from over-use. Mr. Burton has some pleasing lines upon it, reaching in the final couplet a stronger tone, but from the nature of the case they cannot possess any fresh suggestion; on the contrary in such lines as "*Nostalgia*," "*In The Shadows*," "*The First Song*," "*If We Had The Time*," though less poetic in theme, there is a personal note; one feels back of them the great weariness, the futile yearning of life. Some of the elemental emotion is in them, the personal appeal that is so much Mr. Burton's note when he does not give himself too much to things without. Even though one use the visible event but as a sign

of the spirit, as the objective husk of the subjective truth, it is a vision which, if over-indulged, leads at length away from the living, the creative passion within. One philosophizes, one contemplates, but the angel descends less often to trouble the waters within one's own being, and it is, after all, for this movement that one should chiefly watch.

Message and Melody, Mr. Burton's latest collection, opens with perhaps his strongest and most representative poem, "The Song of the Unsuccessful." It is a poem provocative of thought, and upon which innumerable queries follow. Its opening lines utter a heresy against modern thinking; our friends, the Christian Scientists and Mental Scientists and Spiritual Scientists, would at once cross swords with Mr. Burton and wage valiant conflict over the initial statement that God has "barred" from any one the "gifts that are good to hold." Indeed, the entire poem would come under their indictment for the same reason. But something would be won from the conflict; the stuff from which thought is made is in the poem. In the mean time let us have it before we consider it further. Here are the types marshalled before us; we recognize them all as they appear:

We are the toilers from whom God barred
The gifts that are good to hold.
We meant full well, and we tried full hard,
And our failures were manifold.

And we are the clan of those whose kin
Were a millstone dragging them down.
Yea, we had to sweat for our brother's sin
And lose the victor's crown.

The seeming-able, who all but scored,
From their teeming tribe we come :
What was there wrong with us, O Lord,
That our lives were dark and dumb?

The men ten-talented, who still
Strangely missed of the goal,
Of them we are : it seems Thy will
To harrow some in soul.

We are the sinners, too, whose lust
Conquered the higher claims ;
We sat us prone in the common dust,
And played at the devil's games.

We are the hard-luck folk, who strove
Zealously, but in vain :
We lost and lost, while our comrades thrrove,
And still we lost again.

We are the doubles of those whose way
Was festal with fruits and flowers ;
Body and brain we were sound as they,
But the prizes were not ours.

A mighty army our full ranks make ;
We shake the graves as we go ;
The sudden stroke and the slow heartbreak,
They both have brought us low.

And while we are laying life's sword aside,
Spent and dishonored and sad,
Our epitaph this, when once we have died,
“ The weak lie here, and the bad.”

We wonder if this can be really the close,
Life's fever cooled by death's trance ;
And we cry, though it seem to our dearest of foes,
“ God give us another chance !”

The ease of the poem, the crisp Anglo-Saxon which it uses, the forthright stating of the case for the weaker side, and the humanity underlying it, are admirable ; and, further, from an artistic standpoint it is a stronger piece of work than it would have been had its philosophy chimed better with modern thinking. The unsuccessful are speaking ; their view-point and not necessarily the author's is presented. To have tacked on a clause additional, with a hint of the inner laws that govern success, might have saved the philosophy from impeachment as to falling back upon Providence ; but it would have been a decidedly false note put into the mouth of the unsuccessful. We may say at once that

The men ten-talented who still
Strangely missed of the goal,

were the Amiels who suffered paralysis of the will to benumb them, rather than those whom it was the will of the Creator to "harrow in soul;" but it would scarcely be expected of the Amiels themselves to analyze their deficiencies thus openly to the multitude. Impotence of will, however, is not at the root of all failure; who can deny that there is

The clan of those whose kin
Were a millstone dragging them down;

that there are

The hard-luck folk who strove
Zealously, but in vain;

and

The seeming-able, who all but scored,

who put forth apparently more effort to score than did many of the victors, but who were waylaid by some invidious circumstance, or who failed to "grasp the skirts of happy chance" as the flying goddess passed them?

Mr. Burton's poem is too broad to discuss in the limits of a brief sketch; it would furnish a text for the sociologist. All the complexities of modern conditions lie back of its plaint, which becomes an arraignment. One

feels that if God be not within the shadow, he should at least have given Responsibility and Will surer means of keeping watch above their own. The Omaric figure of the Wheel "busied with despite" rises before one as a symbol of this whirling strife where only the strongest may cling, and where the swift revolving thing, having thrown the weakest off, makes of them a cushion for its turning; or, in Omar's phrase, "It speeds to grind upon the open wound."

This is the apparent fact; but within it as axle to the Wheel is the law upon which it rotates, the law of individual choice. Each was given his supreme gift; his word was whispered to him; if he failed to hear it, or heed it, or express it in the predestined way, the flying Wheel casts him to the void, but the law is not impeached thereby. Outside this law, however, as spokes to the Wheel, are the innumerable radiations of human laws and conditions, so that one may scarcely obey the primary command of his nature if he would, and often loses sight of it as the principle upon which his destiny is revolving. Mr. Burton's poem goes beyond the cold-blooded outlook upon the unsuccessful as merely those who are cast from the Wheel, and presents the

truer view that they are by no means always the incompetents or degenerates:

We are the doubles of those whose way
Was festal with fruits and flowers ;
Body and brain we were sound as they,
But the prizes were not ours.

Why? Let the sociologist or the psychologist determine; in the mean time we have the quickened sympathy that follows upon the poem.

Message and Melody has a group of songs turning upon some music theme; of these "Second Fiddle" is the most notable. "In A Theatre" discloses a narrative vein and shows that Mr. Burton has a keen sense of the dramatic in daily life. He has for some time been working upon a group of narrative poems with a prologue connecting them, which are soon to be issued, and which, judging from the fugitive examples in his other volumes, will disclose an interesting phase of his talent.

To leave the impression of Mr. Burton's work that is most characteristic,—the impression of its tenderness, its sympathy, its emphasis upon the essential things,—one can scarcely do better than to summarize it in his own well-known lines, "The Human Touch":

High thoughts and noble in all lands
Help me ; my soul is fed by such.
But ah, the touch of lips and hands,—
 The human touch !
Warm, vital, close, life's symbols dear,—
These need I most, and now, and here.

XIV

CLINTON SCOLLARD

THAT genial and delicate satirist, Miss Agnes Repplier, laments in one of her clever essays that our modern poets incline to dwell upon the sombre side of things, and hence contribute so little to the cheer of life. One cannot but wonder what poetry Miss Repplier has been reading, for our own acquaintance with the song of to-day has been so much the opposite that it is difficult on the spur of the moment to recall any poet of the present group in America whose work is not in the main wholesome and heartening and who is not facing toward the sun. To be sure, there must be the relief of shade, lest the light glare; but they who journey to Castaly are in general cheerful wayfarers, taking gladly the gift of the hours and rendering the Giver a song, and among the blithest of them is Clinton Scollard, to whom life is always smilingly envisaged, and to whom, whether spring or autumn betide, it is still the "sweet o' the year."

If Mr. Scollard's way has ever been "through dolor and dread, over crags and morasses," he is too much the optimist to let the fact be known, or, better still, to recognize it as such; for we see what our own eyes reflect from within, and it is certain that Mr. Scollard's outlook upon life is governed by the inherent conviction that her ways are ways of pleasantness and all her paths are peace. Possibly this conviction would have more value to the less assured nature if the testimony of its winning were set down as a strength-giving force by the way, as we incline in daily life to undervalue the amiability and cheer which are matters of birthright rather than of overcoming; but this is a standard narrow in itself and wide of the issue at stake, which is so much cheer *per se*, whether the fortunate dower of nature, or the alchemic result of experience; nor may one draw too definite a line between the temperamental gift and the spiritual acquisition, especially when the psychology of literature furnishes the only data. It is sufficient to note the result in the work, and its bearing upon the art which shapes it. To Mr. Scollard, then, "Life's enchanted cup" not only "sparkles at the brim;" but when he lifts it to his lips a rainbow arches in its depths, and he has communicated to his



song the flash of sunshine and color sparkling in the clearness of his own draught of life.

Mr. Scollard is almost wholly an objective poet, and by method a painter. His palette is ever ready for the picture furnished him at every turn, and hence his several volumes relating to the Orient, *Lutes of Morn*, *Lyrics of the Dawn*, *Songs of Sunrise Lands*, etc., are perhaps truer standards by which to measure his work than any other, illustrating as they do the pictorial side of his talent. Every object in the Orient is a picture with its individual color and atmosphere, but Mr. Scollard does not merely offer us a sketch in color; the outwardly picturesque is made to interpret a phase of life, and the spiritual contrasts in this land — where one religion or philosophy succeeds another, bringing with it another civilization and leaving desolate the ancient shrines — are indicated with vivid phrase, as in these lines:

A turbaned guard keeps stolid ward by the Zion gate in the sun,
And the Paynim bows his shaven brows at the shrine of Solomon ;
At the chosen altars, long, long quenched is the flame of the sacred fire,
And the jackal has his haunt in the tomb of Hiram, King of Tyre.

Great Herod's pride with its columned aisles is grown with
the olive bough,
And Gath and Dan are but crumbling piles, while Gaza is
gateless now ;
The sea on the sands of Ascalon sets hands to a mournful
lyre,
And the jackal has his haunt in the tomb of Hiram, King
of Tyre.

The closing stanza draws the contrast, or rather makes the spiritual application of the poem by which "the starry fame of one holy name"

Has blazoned Bethlehem for aye the heart of the world's
desire,
While the jackal has his haunt in the tomb of Hiram, King
of Tyre.

The final line of these stanzas may offer a metrical stumbling-block until one catches the sweep of the rhythm and falls in note with the cæsural pause after the word "tomb." Mr. Scollard is nothing if not lyrical, and it would be easier for the traditional camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a captious critic to discover a metrical falsity in his tuneful song.

But to return to the Orient, not alone the reverence for the Christian faith speaks in these poems, but the artistic beauty in the Moslem and other faiths has entered into

them; one is stirred to sympathetic devotion by these lines, —

From many a marble minaret
We heard the rapt muezzin's call ;
And to the prayerful cries my guide,
During each trembling interval,
With reverence serene replied, —

and finds throughout the poems the higher assurance that

The East and West are one in Allah's grace :
Which way so'er ye turn, behold — His face !

It is difficult to choose from the several volumes portraying Oriental life, such poems as shall best represent it, since in any direction we shall find a picture full of color and of strange new charm: the white mosques and minarets; the gardens of citron and pomegranate; the bazaars, with their rare fabrics and curios; the pilgrims, dozing in the shade of the temples; the Bedouins, riding in from the desert; the women carrying from the springs their water-jars. We shall hear the sunrise cry of the muezzin from the minarets; the zither and lute in the gardens at evening; the jargon of tongues in booth and market-place; the philosopher expounding the Koran; the lover singing the songs of Araby. The dra-

matic life of that impulsive, passionate people will be seen in such poems as the "Dancing of Suleima," "At the Tomb of Abel," and "Yousef and Melhem," and the philosophical side in many a poem translating the precepts of the Koran into action; but it is, after all, for the picture in which all this is set that one comes with chief pleasure to these songs. Not only the human element of that strangely fascinating life is incorporated in them, but all the phenomena of nature in its swift-changing moods pass in review before one's eyes, particularly of the swift transitions of the desert sun, stayed by no detaining cloud, and followed by the immediate gloom of night. The graphic lines —

When on the desert's rim,
In sudden, awful splendor, stood the sun —

are excelled in terse, pictorial force by the record of its setting, —

Then sudden dipped the sun. —

Nor easily forgotten are those pictures of lying in the open when the cooling dark had fallen upon the yearning land, or upon the hills when

The night hung over Hebron all her stars,
Miraculous processional of flame,

and below from out the “purple blur” rose the minarets of the mosque where

Sepulchred for centuries untold,
The bones of Isaac and of Joseph lay ;
And broidered cloths of silver and of gold
Were heaped and draped o'er Abraham's crumbled clay.

In *The Lutes of Morn* there are two sonnets — though lyrics in effect, so does the song prevail with Mr. Scollard — that serve hastily to sketch a moving scene and in their touch bring to mind Paul the chronicler. The first is “Passing Rhodes,” and contains these lines with a biblical tang,

At day's dim marge, hard on the shut of eve,
We rocked abreast the rugged Rhodian isle,

which tang appears in stronger flavor in the racy opening of the following :

Cleaving the seadrift through the starlit night,
We left the barren Patmian isle behind,
And scudding northward with a favoring wind,
Lay anigh Chios at the dawn of light.
The shore, the tree-set slopes, the rugged height,
Clear in the morning's roseate air outlined,—
This was his birthplace who, albeit blind,
Saw tall Troy's fall, and sang the tragic sight.
Resting within the roadstead, while the day
Grew into gradual glory, on the ear
Continuous broke the surge-song of the brine ;

And as we marked it rise, or die away
 To rise again, it seemed that we could hear
 The swell and sweep of Homer's mighty line.

Mr. Scollard's musical and finely descriptive poem, "As I Came Down From Lebanon," has become a favorite with the readers of his verse; but while it has great charm, it is not as strong a piece of work as are many other of the Oriental poems, contained in his later volumes, *The Lutes of Morn* and *Lyrics of the Dawn*, nor as that realistic poem, "Khamsin," which appeared in the same collection. Here indeed is the breath of the sirocco:

Oh, the wind from the desert blew in !
 Khamsin,
 The wind from the desert blew in !
 It blew from the heart of the fiery south,
 From the servid sand and the hills of drouth,
 And it kissed the land with its scorching mouth ;
 The wind from the desert blew in !

It blasted the buds on the almond bough,
 And shrivelled the fruit on the orange-tree ;
 The wizened dervish breathed no vow,
 So weary and parched was he.
 The lean muezzin could not cry ;
 The dogs ran mad, and bayed the sky ;
 The hot sun shone like a copper disk,
 And prone in the shade of an obelisk

The water-carrier sank with a sigh,
For limp and dry was his water-skin ;
And the wind from the desert blew in.

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Into the cool of the mosque it crept,
Where the poor sought rest at the prophet's shrine ;
Its breath was fire to the jasmine vine ;
It fevered the brow of the maid who slept,
And men grew haggard with revel of wine.
The tiny fledglings died in the nest ;
The sick babe gasped at the mother's breast.
Then a rumor rose and swelled and spread
From a tremulous whisper, faint and vague,
Till it burst in a terrible cry of dread,
The plague ! the plague ! the plague !—
 Oh the wind, Khamsin,
The scourge from the desert blew in !

Of the lighter notes, upon love and kindred themes, Mr. Scollard has many in his poems of the Orient; "The Song of the Nargileh" is of especial charm, but unfortunately too long to quote. Very graceful, too, is the "Twilight Song" with one of Mr. Scollard's graphic beginnings, but one quaint bit from *The Lutes of Morn* is so characteristic as showing Oriental felicity of speech that while merely a jotting in song, and less important in an artistic sense than many others touching upon the theme of love, I cannot refrain from citing it instead: it is called "Greetings — Cairo."

Upon El Muski did I meet Hassan,
Beneath arched brows his deep eyes twinkling bright,
Good dragoman (and eke good Mussulman)
And cried unto him, "May your day be white!"

"And yours, howadji!" came his swift reply,
A smile illumining the words thereof,
(All men are poets 'neath that kindling sky),
"As white as are the thoughts of her you love!"

The Oriental poems cover not only a varied range of subject, but pass in review nearly every important city and shrine in the length and breadth of that storied land, making poetical footnotes to one's history and filling his memory with pictures.

The second source of Mr. Scollard's inspiration, doubtless the first in point of time, is his delight in nature. Here, too, the objective side predominates. He is footfaring, with every sense alert to see, to hear, and to enjoy; he slips the world of men as a leash and becomes the fetterless comrade of the vagrant things of earth. He stops to do no philosophizing by the way,—the analogies, the laws, the evolving purposes of nature, are rarely touched upon in his verse; nor is he one of the poet-naturalists, intent to observe and record with infinite fidelity the fact, with its mystic spirit of beauty. He finds in the obvious side of nature such glamour and

magic as suffice for inspiration and delight; and it is this side which entralls him almost wholly. In other words, his nature vision is rather outlook than insight, though always sympathetic in fancy and delicate in touch. He seems to see only the gladness in the season's phases, and greets white-shrouded winter with all the ardor that he would bestow upon flower-decked June.

He has one volume entitled *Footfarings*, written partly in prose and partly in verse,—a book abrim with morning joy, and bringing with it the aroma of wood-flowers and the minstrelsy of birds. The prose predominates, and is worthy the pen of a poet: its imaginative grace, its enthusiasm, and its quaint and delicate fancy impart to it all the flavor of poetry while adhering to a crisp and racy style. Each chapter is prefaced by a keynote of verse, such as that which conducts one to the haunt of the trillium, where

These nun-like flowers with spotless urns,
That shine with such a snowy gloss,
Will seem, amid the suppliant ferns,
To bow above the cloistral moss.

Then Hope, her starry eyes upraised,
Will suddenly surprise you there,
And you will feel that you have gazed
On the white sanctity of prayer !

Were it within the province of this study, I should like to quote some of Mr. Scollard's prose from a "Woodland Walk," "A Search for the Lady's Slipper," or many another picturesque chapter. One loses thought of print, and is for the nonce following his errant fancy through meadow and coppice to the heart of the spicy fir-woods, picking his way over the forest brooks, from stone to stone; following the alluring skid-roads, latticed by new growths on either side and arched above by interlacing green; penetrating into the tamarack thickets at the lure of the hermit-thrush, that spirit-voice of song; resting on a springy bed of moss and fern,—becoming, in short, wayfellow of desire, and thrall but to his will. Mr. Scollard has also published within the past year a book of nature verse called *The Lyric Bough*, which contains some of his best work in this way; one of its livelier fancies is that of "The Wind":

O the wind is a faun in the spring-time
When the ways are green for the tread of the May;
List! hark his lay!
Whist! mark his play!
T-r-r-r-l!
Hear how gay!

O the wind is a dove in the summer
 When the ways are bright with the wash of the moon ;
 List ! hark him tune !
 Whist ! mark him swoon !
 C-o-o-o-o !
 Hear him croon !

O the wind is a gnome in the autumn
 When the ways are brown with the leaf and burr ;
 Hist ! mark him stir !
 List ! hark him whir !
 S-s-s-s-t !
 Hear him chirr !

O the wind is a wolf in the winter
 When the ways are white for the hornèd owl ;
 Hist ! mark him prowl !
 List ! hark him howl !
 G-r-r-r-l !
 Hear him growl !

One of the earlier books, *The Hills of Song*, contained a brief, merry-toned lyric, with a cavalier note, that sung itself into the *American Anthology*, and is perhaps as characteristic and charming a leave-taking of this phase of Mr. Scollard's work as one may cite :

Be ye in love with April-tide ?
 I' faith, in love am I !
 For now 't is sun, and now 't is shower,
 And now 't is frost, and now 't is flower,
 And now 't is Laura laughing-eyed,
 And now 't is Laura shy.

Ye doubtful days, O slower glide !
Still smile and frown, O sky !
Some beauty unforeseen I trace
In every change of Laura's face ; —
Be ye in love with April-tide ?
I' faith, in love am I !

Balladry furnishes the third source of Mr. Scollard's singing impulse. The Oriental poems have somewhat of this phase of his work, though more especially inclining to the narrative style; and the epic poem "Skenandoa," while written in a story-lyric, shows the ballad-making qualities, which in their true note had been heard earlier in "Taillefer the Trouvère," and have been heard more definitely in *Ballads of Valor and Victory*, recently written in collaboration with Mr. Wallace Rice, and reciting the heroisms and adventures of soldier, sailor, and explorer from Drake to Dewey.

Ballad-writing is an art calling for distinct gifts. The dramatic element must predominate. The story first—and if this be colorless, there is no true ballad; the verse next—and if this be flaccid, or if it swing to the other extreme and become too strained and tense, there is no true ballad; for the essence of ballad-writing is in the freedom of the movement, the swing and verve with which one

recounts a picturesque story. Mr. Scollard's contributions to the volume are sung with spontaneity and with a virile note, and in the matter of characterization, fixing the personality of the hero before the mind, the work is especially strong; witness "Riding With Kilpatrick;" "Wayne at Stony Point;" "Montgomery at Quebec;" the picture of Thomas Macdonough at the Battle of Plattsburg Bay, or in more recent times of "Private Blair of the Regulars," the modern Sidney, who, dying, gave the last draught of his canteen to his wounded fellows.

"The White November" and "The Eve of Bunker Hill" are among the best of the ballads. The former brings with it a well-known note, but one newly bedight with brave phrase; indeed, all the celebrated ballad measures appear in these song stories, but well individualized in diction and dramatic mood. They differ of course in the degree of these qualities; some have too slight an incident to chronicle; some might with better effect have been omitted, particularly "War in April," by Mr. Rice; but for this he atones by "The Minute-Men of Northboro" and other vigorous contributions to the collection. The ballads have the merit of structural compactness. While the necessary portrayal of the incident renders

many of the best of them too long to quote, there are, in Mr. Scollard's contribution to the book, few superfluous stanzas; each plays its essential part in the development of the story. They may not, then, be quoted without their full complement of strophes, which debars us from citing the "White November," "Wayne at Stony Point," and others mentioned as most representative; but here is the tale of "Riding With Kilpatrick," not more valiant than many of the others, but celebrating a picturesque figure. There are certain reminiscent notes of "How They Brought the Good News from Ghent to Aix" in this galloping anapestic measure; and its graphic opening line calls to mind that instantaneous picture, "At Aershot, up leaped of a sudden the sun."

Dawn peered through the pines as we dashed at the ford;
Afar the grim guns of the infantry roared;
There were miles yet of dangerous pathway to pass,
And Moseby might menace, and Stuart might mass;
But we mocked every doubt, laughing danger to scorn,
As we quaffed with a shout from the wine of the morn
Those who rode with Kilpatrick to valor were born!

How we chafed at delay! How we itched to be on!
How we yearned for the fray where the battle-reek shone!
It was *forward*, not *halt*, stirred the fire in our veins,
When our horses' feet beat to the clink of the reins;

It was *charge*, not *retreat*, we were wonted to hear ;
It was *charge*, not *retreat*, that was sweet to the ear;
Those who rode with Kilpatrick had never felt fear !

At last the word came, and troop tossed it to troop ;
Two squadrons deployed with a falcon-like swoop ;
While swiftly the others in echelons formed,
For there, just ahead, was the line to be stormed.
The trumpets rang out ; there were guidons ablow ;
The white summer sun set our sabres aglow ;
Those who rode with Kilpatrick charged straight at the foe !

We swept like the whirlwind ; we closed ; at the shock
The sky seemed to reel and the earth seemed to rock ;
Steel clashed upon steel with a deafening sound,
While a redder than rose-stain encrimsoned the ground.
If we gave back a space from the fierce pit of hell,
We were rallied again by a voice like a bell,
Those who rode with Kilpatrick rode valiantly well !

Rang sternly his orders from out of the wrack :
Re-form there, New Yorkers ! You, Harris Light, back !
Come on, men of Maine ! we will conquer or fall !
Now, forward, boys, forward, and follow me, all !
A Bayard in boldness, a Sidney in grace,
A lion to lead, and a stag-hound to chase —
Those who rode with Kilpatrick looked Death in the face !

Though brave were our foemen, they faltered and fled ;
Yet that was no marvel when such as he led !
Long ago, long ago, was that desperate day !
Long ago, long ago, strove the Blue and the Gray !
Praise God that the red sun of battle is set !
That our hand-clasp is loyal and loving — and yet
Those who rode with Kilpatrick can never forget !

The Lochinvar key is also struck in the description of Kilpatrick. Mr. Scollard sounds a less sanguinary note in most of the ballads, as that of "The Troopers" or "King Philip's Last Stand."

"On the Eve of Bunker Hill," while recording no thrilling story, has a note of pensive beauty in its quiet description of the preparation for battle before that memorable day, and of the prayer offered in the presence of the soldiers, "ranged a-row" in the open night. The initial stanza gives the setting and key:

'T was June on the face of the earth, June with the rose's
breath,
When life is a gladsome thing, and a distant dream is death ;
There was gossip of birds in the air, and the lowing of herds
by the wood,
And a sunset gleam in the sky that the heart of a man holds
good ;
Then the nun-like twilight came, violet-vestured and still,
And the night's first star outshone afar on the eve of Bunker
Hill.

Taking the volume throughout, it is a stirringly sung *résumé* of all the chief deeds in American history to which attach valor and romance, and is not only attractive reading, but should be in the hands of every lad as a stimulus to patriotism, and to focus in his mind, as

textbooks could never do, the exploits of the brave and the strong.

In the lyrical narrative poem, such as "Guiraut, the Troubadour," Mr. Scollard has one of his most characteristic vehicles. The adventures of the singer who sought a maid in Carcassonne are, no doubt, romantically enhanced by association of the name with that of the hapless one who "had not been to Carcassonne;" but it is certain that one follows the troubadour in his "russet raimentry," drawn by his charm as

Unto the gate of Carcassonne
(Ah, how his blithe lips smiled upon
The warded gate of Carcassonne !)
As light of foot as Love he strode ;
The budding flowers along the road
Bloomed sudden, with his song for lure ;
And softlier the river flowed
Before Guiraut, the troubadour.

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Unto a keep in Carcassonne
(No sweeter voice e'er drifted on
That frowning keep in Carcassonne !)
Anon the singer drew anigh, —

but we may not follow his propitious fortunes, glimpsed but to show the manner of their telling. The parenthetical lines, recurring in each stanza, impart a peculiar charm to the recital,

but the diction and phrasing, while pleasant and in harmony, have no especial distinction in themselves, and this illustrates a frequent characteristic of Mr. Scollard's work that the melody often carries the charm rather than the expression or basic theme. He is primarily a singer, he has the "lute in tune," and the song is so spontaneous as sometimes to outstrip the motive. There is always a felicitous, and often unique, turn of phrase and a most imaginative fancy, but one feels in a good deal of the work a lack of acid; it is too bland to bite as deeply as it ought. Just a bit sharper tang is needful.

The message should also inform more vitally the melody, wedding more subtly the outer and inner grace. A poet is a teacher, whether he will or no, and the heart should be the vital textbook of his expounding. It is because of their deeper rooting in life, though a life foreign to us, that the Oriental poems of Mr. Scollard have often greater vitality than the Occidental ones, whose inspiration is found chiefly in nature. His ballads show that he has a sympathetic insight into character and a knowledge of human motive that would, if infused more widely through his work, give to it a warmth of personal appeal and a subjectivity which in

many of its phases it now lacks. The golden thread of Joy is woven so constantly into the web of his song that those whose woof is crossed with the hempen thread of Pain are likely to feel that he has no word for them, no hint as to the subtle transformation by which the hempen thread may merge into the gold, when the finished fabric hurtles from the loom. In other words, Mr. Scollard's work is too objective to carry with it the spiritual meaning that it would if ingrained more deeply in the hidden life of the soul. Along this line lies its finer development: not that it shall lose a jot of its cheer, but that it shall constantly inform it with a richer and deeper meaning.

XV

MARY MCNEIL FENOLLOSA

TO be a poet of the East, one must be a painter, using words as a colorist uses pigment. His poem must be a picture wherein form and detail are subjected to the values of tone and atmosphere; like the dawn-crest of Fujiyama it must glow, it must dazzle with tints and light. To convert the pen into an artist's brush, the vocabulary into a palette, is an end not to be gained by striving; it is a talent *a priori*, a temperamental color, a temperamental art.

So vividly is this shown in the work of Mrs. Mary McNeil Fenollosa that whereas in her Eastern poems she is every whit the artist, in her Western, her Occidental poems, she is without special distinction. Certain of her Western poems have a conventional, mechanical tone, while those of the East are abrim with vitality and impulse. They were not "reared by wan degrees;" the craftsman did not fashion them; and although varying in charm, there are few that lack the Eastern spirit.

Mrs. Fenollosa's bit of the Orient is Japan, where nature is ever coquetting,—laughing in the cherry, sighing in the lotos. Nature in the Orient is invested with a personality foreign to Western countries, a personality reminiscent of the gods. Then, too, nature is given a more prominent place in the poetry of the East than is love, or any of the subjects, so infinite in variety, which engross a Western singer; and it happens that Mrs. Fenollosa, catching this spirit during her life in Japan, gives us chiefly nature poems in her Eastern collection. With artist-strokes where each is sure, she flashes this picture before us:

The day unfolds like a lotos-bloom,
 Pink at the tip, and gold at the core,
Rising up swiftly through waters of gloom
 That lave night's shore ;

or this vision of—

The cloud-like curve,
 The loosened sheaf,
The ineffable pink of a lotos leaf.

One great charm of the imagery in Mrs. Fenollosa's Japanese poems is its subtlety of suggestion. The imagination has play; something is left for the fancy of the reader, which can scarcely be said of some of the highly

wrought verse of our own country. The first lyric in the collection hints of a score of things beyond its eight-line scope:

O let me die a singing !
O let me drown in light !
Another day is winging
 Out from the nest of night.
The morning glory's velvet eye
 Brims with a jewelled bead.
To-day my soul 's a dragon-fly,
 The world a swaying reed !

"To-day my soul 's a dragon-fly,"—a wingéd incarnation of liberty and joy; "the world a swaying reed,"—a pliant thing made for my delight, an empery of which I am the sovereign and may have my will.

But these Japanese songs have not wholly the lighter melody; there are those that sing of the devastation of the rice-fields after the floods, a grim and tragic picture; and there are interpretations of the dreams of the great bronze Buddha, looking with sad, inscrutable eyes upon the pilgrims who, with the recurrent seasons, come creeping to his feet like insects from the mould; and there is a story of "The Path of Prayer,"—a Japanese superstition so human that one is glad of a religion where sentiment overtops reason. It pictures one



walking at evening under gnarled old pines until he chances upon a hidden path leading through a hundred gates that keep a sacred way ; and as he passes he is amazed to see along the route, springing as if from the earth, fluttering white papers, tied

As banners pendent from a mimic wand.

The poem continues :

I wondered long ; when, from the drowsy wood,
A whisper reached me, " 'Tis the Path of Prayer,
Where, nightly, Kwannon walks in pitying mood,
To read the sad petitions planted there."

Ah, simple faith ! The sun was in the west ;
And darkness smote with flails his quivering light.
Beside the path I knelt ; and, with the rest,
My alien prayer was planted in the night.

It is to be regretted that Mrs. Fenollosa gives us so little of the religious or mystical in Japanese thought, since no country is richer in material of the sort, and especially as the isolated poems and passages in which she touches upon it are all so interpretative. She has one poem, a petition of old people at a temple, that strikes deep root both in pathos and philosophy. Perhaps the Japanese excel all other peoples in the reverence paid to age, and yet no excess of consideration can sup-

plant the melancholy of that time. The second stanza of Mrs. Fenollosa's poem expresses the aloofness of the old,—

For thy comfort, Lord, we pray,
Namu Amida Butsu !
In the rice-fields, day by day,
Now the strong ones comb the grain ;
Once we laughed there in the rain,
Stooping low in sun and cold
For our helpless young and old ;
In the rice-fields day by day,
Namu Amida Butsu !

And the last stanza is imbued with the Buddhistic resignation, the desire to pass, to be reabsorbed, reinvested, reborn. It is philosophical after the Karmic law, and beautiful in spirit even to a Western mind:

For thy mercy, Lord, we pray,
Namu Amida Butsu !
Let the old roots waste away,
That the green may pierce the light !
Life and thought, in withered plight,
Choke the morning. Far beneath
Stirs the young blade in its sheath.
Let the old roots pass away !
Namu Amida Butsu !

This is symbolism which upon a cursory reading one might lose entirely, thinking its import to be, let the old die and give place

to the young; whereas it is, let the old in oneself, the outworn, the material, the ineffectual, die, and give place to the new.

That the green may pierce the light:—

that out of physical decay a regrowth of the spirit may spring; for already,

Far beneath
Stirs the young blade in its sheath:—

the soul is quickening for the upper air and making ready to burst its detaining mould. How beautiful is the recognition that

Life and thought, in withered plight,
Choke the morning,

the young eternal self, that, having fulfilled the conditions of Karma in its present embodiment of destiny, is obeying the irresistible law that calls it to new modes of being. It is unnecessary to be of the Buddhistic faith to feel the spell and the beauty of its philosophy.

Mrs. Fenollosa's gift is chiefly lyrical, although her sonnets and descriptive poems have many passages of beauty; the picturesque in fancy and phrasing is ever at her command, and there are few poems in which one is not

arrested by some unique expression, or bit of imagery, as this from "An Eastern Cry":

Beneath the maples crickets wake,
And chip the silence, flake on flake.

Or that in which the rain

Brimmed great magnolias up with scented wine.

Or the fir-tree stood,

With clotted plumage sagging to the land.

Or when Fujiyama seen at dawn is pictured as

A crown self poised in mist,

and again as

A frail mirage of Paradise
Set in the quickening air.

So true in color and vision are Mrs. Fenollosa's lyrics that one cannot understand how in a sonnet she can be guilty of so mixed a metaphor as this describing a "Morning On Fujisan":

Through powdered mist of dawn-lit pearl and rose
There lifts one lotos-peak of cleaving white,
The swan-like rhapsody of dying night,
Which, softly soaring through the ether, blows
To hang there breathless. . . .

The first two lines are unimpeachable, but when the "lotos-peak" is amplified into a "swan-like rhapsody," one is swept quite away from his bearings. It is but an illustration of the effort that often goes to the building of a sonnet and renders forced and inept what was designed to be artistic. Mrs. Fenollosa's sonnets, however, do not often violate congruity, for while the sonnet is by no means her representative form, she handles it with as much ease as do most of the modern singers, and occasionally one comes upon her most characteristic lines in this compass; but it is true of the sonnet form in general, except in the hands of a thorough artist, that the mechanism is too obvious and obscures the theme.

To know Mrs. Fenollosa at her best one must read "Miyoko San," "Full Moon Over Sumidagawa," "An Eastern Cry," "Exiled," and this song "To a Japanese Nightingale," full of mystic, wistful beauty, of suggestive spiritual grace. How delicate is its fashioning, and yet how it defines a picture, silhouettes it against the Orient night!

Dark on the face of a low, full moon
Swayeth the tall bamboo.

No flute nor quiver of song is heard,
Though sheer on the tip a small brown bird
Sways to an inward tune.

O small brown bird, like a dusky star,
 Lone on the tall bamboo,
Thou germ of the soul of a summer night,
Thou quickening core of a lost delight,
Of ecstasy born afar,

Soar out thy bliss to the tingling air,
 Sing from the tall bamboo !
Loosen the long, clear, syrup note
That shimmers and throbs in thy delicate throat ;
Mellow my soul's despair !

XVI

RIDGELY TORRENCE

MR. RIDGELY TORRENCE, whose poetic drama, *El Dorado*, brought him generous recognition, gave earlier hostages to fame in the shape of a small volume with the caption, *The House of a Hundred Lights*, and gravely subtitled, "A Psalm of Experience after Reading a Couplet of Bidpai."

Into this little book were packed some charming whimsicalities, together with some graver thoughts — though not too grave — and some fancies full tender. It had, however, sufficient resemblance to Omar Khayyám to bring it under a Philistine indictment, though its point of view was in reality very different. It was a clever bit of ruminating upon the Where and How and Why and Whence, without attempting to arrive at these mysteries, but rather to laugh at those who did. Mr. Torrence is so artistic as to know that only the masters may go upon the road in search of the Secret, and that the average wayfarer may not

hope to overtake it, but rather to suggest it by a hint now and then. The philosophy of *The House of a Hundred Lights* is in the main of the jocular sort; and Bidpai of indefinite memory may well chuckle to himself in some remote celestial corner that any couplet of his should have been so potent as to produce it.

Mr. Torrence has not, that I can see, filched the fire from Omar's altar to kindle his hundred lights; this, for illustration, is pure whimsicality, not fatalistic philosophy, as a similar thought would be in Omar:

“Doubt everything,” the Thinker said,
When I was parch'd with Reason's drought.
Said he, “Trust me, I've probed these things;
Have utter faith in me, — and doubt !”

Though the sky reel and Day dissolve,
And though a myriad suns fade out,
One thing of earth seems permanent
And founded on Belief : 't is — Doubt.

But best of all is that quatrain in which he exonerates Providence :

What ! doubt the Master Workman's hand
Because my fleshly ills increase ?
No ; for there still remains one chance
That I am not His Masterpiece.

If a cleverer bit of humor than that has been put into four lines, I have not seen it, nor a



more delightful epitome than this of the inconsistent moralizing of youth :

Yet what have I to do with sweets
Like Love, or Wine, or Fame's dear curse?
For I can do without all things
Except — except the universe.

Mr. Torrence's quatrains penetrate into the nebulous dreams of youth, or rather, interpret them, since *The House of a Hundred Lights* was reared in that charméd air, and carry one through the realm of rainbows to the land of the gray light, to which every pilgrim comes anon. Love receives its toll, the costliest and most precious as youth fares on; and Mr. Torrence proves himself a poet in his picture of this tribute-giving at the road-house of Love. Not only the visioning, but the lucidity of the words, and their soft consonance, prove him sensitive to the values of cadence and simplicity:

Last night I heard a wanton girl
Call softly down unto her lover,
Or call at least unto the shade
Of Cypress where she knew he'd hover.

Said she, "Come forth, my Perfect One;
The old bugs sleep and take their ease;
We shall have honey overmuch
Without the buzzing of the bees."

Ah, Foolish Ones, I heard your vows
And whispers underneath the tree.
Her father is more wakeful than
She ever dreamed, for I — was he.

I saw them kissing in the shade
And knew the sum of all my lore :
God gave them Youth, God gave them Love,
And even God can give no more.

But much more delicate is this quatrain which follows the last, and traces the unfolding of a young girl's nature in the years that shape the dream. It is a bit of genuine artistry :

At first, she loved nought else but flowers,
And then — she only loved the Rose ;
And then — herself alone ; and then —
She knew not what, but now — she knows.

This is a deftly fashioned lyric, rather than a stanza conjoined to others, though, for that matter, the thread of conjunction in the poem is slight; almost any of the quatrains might be detached without loss of value save in atmosphere, as they are arranged with a certain logical view and grow a bit more serious as they progress. We spoke, for instance, of the path of youth leading to the grayer light, and incidentally that Youth acquaints himself with pain as a wayfellow:

Yet even for Youth's fevered blood
There is a certain balm here in
This maiden's mouth : O sweet disease !
And happy, happy medicine !

And maiden, should these bitter tears
You shed be burdensome, know this :
There is a cure worth all the pain,
— To-night — beneath the moon — a kiss.

Girl, when he gives you kisses twain,
Use one, and let the other stay ;
And hoard it, for moons die, red fades,
And you may need a kiss — some day.

No one will deny an individual grace of touch upon these strings. The artistic value of the quatrains is unequal; they would bear weeding; and there is a hint of spent impulse in the latter part of the volume, though it may be only by virtue of the grouping that the cleverer stanzas chance to be massed toward the front, as they were probably not written in the order in which they appear. Here and there in the latter part of the volume one comes upon some of Mr. Torrence's most unique fancies; and, too, if they do not always give one the same pleasurable surprise, they are more thoughtful and the verities are in them. Indeed, Mr. Torrence's "Psalm of Experience" is not altogether born of a happy

insouciance; look a bit more closely and you penetrate the mask, and a face looks out at you, like to your own face, questioning and uncertain. We should be glad to quote more of Mr. Torrence's quatrains, but must look at *El Dorado*, his more mature work, which won so kindly a reception from the critics and public.

It would be idle to assert that *El Dorado* is a great achievement, but it is a fine achievement, and notably so as a first incursion into a field beset with snares for the unwary. Into some of these Mr. Torrence has fallen, but the majority of them he has avoided and has proven his right to fare upon the way he has elected.

As to plot, one may say that *El Dorado* is a moving tale, full of incident and action, and sharply defining the characters before the mind. The action is focused to a definite point in each scene, making an effective climax, and in the subtler shading of the story, where Perth, the released prisoner, mistaking the love of Beatrix d'Estrada for the young officer of the expedition, thinks it a requital of his own, Mr. Torrence has shown himself sensitive to the effects that are psychological rather than objective; and, indeed, in this quality, as evinced throughout the drama in the character of Perth, the essence of Mr. Torrence's art consists.

It is more or less an easy artifice for the dramatist to reduce his hero to the verge of despair just as his heroine is conveniently near to save him from leaping over a precipice; but artifice becomes art when the impalpable emotions of a nature lost almost to its own consciousness begin to be called from diffusion and given direction and meaning. While the characterization of Perth is not altogether free from strained sentiment, one recognizes in it a higher achievement than went to the making of the more spectacular crises of the play. The dramatic materials of *El Dorado* are in the main skilfully handled, and there is logical congruity in the situations as they evolve, assuming the premise of the plot. As an acting play, however, it would require the further introduction of women characters, Beatrix sustaining alone, in its present cast, the feminine element of the drama.

As to the play as literature, as poetry, there is much to commend, and somewhat to deplore. If it remain as literature, it must contain elements that transcend those of its action; if a well-developed plot were literature, then many productions of the stage that are purely ephemeral would take their place as works of art. Between the dramatic and the theatrical there

is a nice distinction, and only an artist may wholly avoid the pitfalls of the latter. Mr. Torrence's drama seems to me to blend the two qualities. For illustration the following outpouring of Coronado, when he returns for a last hour with Beatrix, then disguising to follow his army, and finds her faithless to the tryst, is purely melodramatic. The Friar Ubeda reminds him that the trumpets call him, whereupon Coronado exclaims :

It is no call, but rather do their sounds
Lash me like brazen whips away from her.
They shriek two names to me, Honour and Hell ;
They drive me with two words, Duty and Death.
These are the things that I can only find
Outside her arms.

In the same scene, however, occurs this fine passage, compact of hopelessness, and having in it the whole heart-history of Perth, who speaks it. He is urged by the friar to hasten that they may join the expedition as it passes the walls :

PERTH. It would be useless.

UBEDA. In what way ?

PERTH. If to go would be an ill,
I need not hasten ; it will come to me.
And if a good, they will have gone too far ;
I could not overtake them.

This passage recalls another memorably fine, — that in which Perth upon his release would return to his dungeon, being oppressed by the light:

I seem to have to bear the sky's whole arch,
Like Atlas, on my shoulders.

This is divining a sensation with subtle sympathy. But to return to the consideration of the literature of Mr. Torrence's drama from the standpoint of his characters. Beatrix is a natural, elemental type of girl, untroubled by subtleties. Impulse and will are one in her understanding, and she counts it no shame to follow where they lead. The love that exists between herself and Coronado discloses no great emotional features, no complexities; but it is not strained nor unnatural, and in the scene where Beatrix discloses her identity to Coronado, as he in desperation at the failure of the quest for *El Dorado* is about to throw himself over the cliff, — while the situation itself has elements of melodrama, the dialogue is wholly free from it, and indeed contains some of the truest poetry in the play. Coronado, with distraught fancy, thinks it the spirit of Beatrix by whom he is delivered, and fears to approach her lest he dissolve the wraith, where-

upon Beatrix, among other reassurances, speaks these lovely lines:—

Have the snow-textured arms of dreams these pulses?
Has the pale spirit of sleep a mouth like this?

The counter-passion of Mr. Torrence's drama, in which its tragedy lies, the passion of Perth for Beatrix, is so manifestly foredoomed on the side of sentiment that one looks upon it purely from a psychological standpoint, but from that standpoint it is handled so skilfully that the dramatic feeling of the play centres chiefly in this character. The Friar Ubeda is also strongly drawn, and one of the motive forces of the drama. It is he who reveals to Perth that he has a son born after his incarceration who is none other than the young leader of the expedition, Don Francis Coronado, although his identity is not revealed by the priest, and only the clew given that on his hand is branded a crucifix, as a foolish penance for some boyhood sin. Many of the finest passages of the play are spoken between Perth and Ubeda.

The temptation to Shakespearize into which nearly all young dramatists fall, Mr. Torrence has wholly avoided, nor has his verse any of the grandiloquent strain that often mars dra-

matic poetry. It is at times over-sustained, but is flexible and holds in the main to simplicity of effect. Such a passage as the following shows it in its finest quality. Here are feeling, consistent beauty, and dignity of word. The lines are spoken by Perth in reply to Coronado's parting injunction to remember that the Font is there, pointing in the direction of their quest:

O God, 'tis everywhere !
But where for me ? Youth, love, or hope fulfilled,
Whatever dew distils from out its depths,
Sparkles till it has lured my eager lips
And then sinks back. 'T is in his desolate heart —
And yet I may not drink. 'T is in her eyes —
And yet my own cannot be cooled by it.
The wilderness of life is full of wells,
But each is barred and walled about and guarded.

.
The Source ! Can it be true ? Oh, may it not be ?
May it not at last await me in that garden
To which we bleed our way through all this waste ? —
One cup — some little chalice that will hold
One drop that will not shudder into mist
Till I have drained it.

Passages of this sort might be duplicated in *El Dorado*, were they not too long to quote with the context necessary to them.

The passage cited above holds a deep suggestion in the lines : —

One drop that will not shudder into mist
Till I have drained it.

Here is human longing epitomized; and again the words in which Coronado speaks, as he thinks, to the shade of Beatrix,—

No, I will no more strive to anything
And so dispel it,—

are subtly typical of the fear in all joy, the trembling dread to grasp, lest it elude us. That, too, is a fine passage in which Coronado replies to Perth, who seeks to cheer him with thought of the Water of all Dreams:

Ah, that poor phantom Source! I never sought it.
I have found the thing called Youth too deadly bitter
To grasp at further tasting.

“The thing called Youth” is often “deadly bitter;” and Mr. Torrence has well suggested it in the revulsion from hope to despair which follows upon the knowledge that El Dorado is but a land of Dead-Sea fruit. The atmosphere with which Mr. Torrence has invested the scene where all are waiting for the dawn to lift and reveal the valley of their desire is charged with mystery and portent; one becomes a tense, breathless member of the group upon the cliff, and not a spectator,

Mr. Torrence is occasionally led into temptation, artistically speaking, by the seduction of his imagination, and is carried a bit beyond the point of discretion, as in this passage taken from the scene where the expedition awaits the dawn on the morning when its dream is expected to be realized. Perth and Coronado are looking to the mist to lift. Perth speaks:

And now in that far edge, as though a seed
Were sown, there is a hint of budding gray,
A bud not wholly innocent of night,
And yet a color.

COR. But see, it dies!

PERTH. Yet now it blooms again,
Whiter, and with a rumor of hidden trumpets.

Buds in the common day do not usually bloom with a "rumor of hidden trumpets." In the same scene Coronado asks:

Can you not see
The gem which is the mother of all dawn?

PERTH. There is some gleam.

COR. It waits one moment yet
Before it thunders upon our blinded sight!

It is at least a new conception that *gems* should *thunder* upon one's *blinded sight*! In another scene Mr. Torrence has the "devouring sun" deepen its "wormlike course" to the world's edge. Again, his heroine's mouth is a little

tremulous "from all the troubled violets in her veins." We are a bit uncertain, too, as to the significance of a "throne-galled night;" but these are, after all, minor matters when weighed with the prevailing grace and beauty of Mr. Torrence's lines.

The last act of *El Dorado* has to my mind less of strength and beauty than its predecessors, and dramatically one may question its conception and construction. In a general study of Mr. Torrence's plot it seemed that the situations were all developed to the best advantage, but an exception must, I think, be made in regard to the last act. One of the vital requisites of drama is that the suspense of the action shall hold to the end; there may be minor *dénouements*, but the plot must not be so constructed that the element of mystery shall have been eliminated ere the close, and this is exactly what has been done in *El Dorado*. The two great scenes have already taken place: *El Dorado* has been proven a myth, and Beatrix has been united to her lover; there remains but one thread to unravel, the love of Perth for Beatrix; and of that the audience has already the full knowledge and clew, having seen her rejoined to her lover. The only motive of the last act is that the audience may see the

effect upon Perth when the revelation of his loss is made to him; and it is more than a question whether a scene depending so entirely upon the psychology of the situation could hold as a climax to the play.

There is a revelation, however, logically demanded by the premises of the plot, in expectation of which the interest is held, and in whose nonfulfilment I cannot but think that Mr. Torrence has lost the opportunity for the most humanly true and effective climax of his play,—the disclosure to Coronado of his parentage. Ubeda, earlier in the drama, has enjoined Perth not to reveal his identity to his son, lest it injure his public career; but in the hour when the supreme loss has come, when Beatrix, as the wife of Coronado, rejoins the homeward detachment of Perth and his friend, and the mortal stroke has fallen,—then Ubeda should have declared the relationship and placed to Perth's lips ere he died the one draught that would not "shudder into mist" ere he had drained it,—the draught of love from the heart of his child. The bird of hope and light should hover just above the darkest tragedy,—should brood above it with healing in its wings. This is partially realized in the lines in which Mr. Torrence has chosen to veil,

and yet hint, the relationship which Coronado does not understand :

PERTH. At last I see ! always I seemed to know
That one day, — though I knew not when, —
some hour,
I should behold and know it and possess it, —
The Font !

COR. No, it is snow and wine.

BEAT. He wanders !

PERTH. I had not thought to find it so at last,
Yet here, and here alone, it has arisen
Within these two — my only youth ! Yes —
now !

Upon this hour and place at last ! The Source !
It is a barren place — yet flowers are here,
Those which for certain days I seemed to lose ;
A desolate tender fatherhood has here
Found growth, and bears, but all too piteously,
A futile bud.

The impression left upon one by *El Dorado* is that of poetic distinction, and the drama in its character drawing, plot and action is an augury of finer possibilities in the same branch of art.

XVII

GERTRUDE HALL

MISS GERTRUDE HALL is a poet of the intimate mood, the personal touch, one who writes for herself primarily, and not for others. One fancies that verses such as these were penned in musing, introspective moments in the form in which they flitted through the mind, and were indesecrate of further touch. They are as words warm upon the lips, putting one in magnetic *rappor*t with a speaker; and their defects, as well as distinctions, are such as spring from this spontaneity. Frequently a change of word or line, readily suggested to the reader, would have made technically perfect what now bears a flaw; but these lapses are neither so marked nor so frequent as to detract from the prevailing grace of the verse, and but serve to illustrate the point in question,—their unpremeditated note and freedom from posing.

One is not so much arrested by the inevitable image and word in these lyrics of the

Age of Fairygold, as by the feeling, the mood, that pervades them. It is not a buoyant mood, nor yet a sombre one, but rather the expression of a varied impulse, a melody of many stops, such as one might play for himself at evening, wandering from theme to theme. The poems convey the impression of coming in touch with a personality rather than a book, the veil between the author and reader being impalpable; and this, their most obvious distinction, is a quality in which many poets of the present day are lacking, either from a mistaken delicacy in regarding their own inner life as an isolated mood not of import to others, or in robbing it of personality and warmth by technical elaboration.

One may confide to the world by means of art what he would not reveal to his closest friend, and yet keep inviolate his spiritual self-hood; but to withhold this disclosure, to become but a poet of externals, is to abrogate one's claim to speak at all; for a life, however meagre, has something unique and essential to convey, and while one delights in the artist observation, the vivid pictorial touch, it must not be divorced from the subjective. The poems of Miss Hall are happily blended of the objective and subjective; here, for illustration,

is a lighter note bringing one in thrall to that seductive, tantalizing charm, that irresistible allurement, of the *Vita Nuova* of the year:

I try to fix my eyes upon my book,
But just outside a budding spray
Flaunts its new leaves as if to say,
“Look! — look!”

I trim my pen, I make it fine and neat;
There comes a flutter of brown wings.
A little bird alights and sings,
“Sweet! — sweet!”

O little bird, O go away! be dumb!
For I must ponder certain lines;
And straight a nodding flower makes signs,
“Come! — come!”

O Spring, let me alone! O bird, bloom, beam,
“I have no time to dream!” I cry;
The echo breathes a soft, long sigh,
“Dream! — dream!”

The beautiful lyric,

“Ah, worshipped one, ah, faithful Spring!”

tempers this blitheness to a pensive strain, though only as one may introduce a note of minor in a staccato melody. In another bit of verse celebrating the renewing year, and noting how joy lays his finger on one's lips and makes him mute, occur these delicate lines:

Thrice happy, oh, thrice happy still the Earth
That can express herself in roses, yea,
Can make the lily tell her inmost thought !

One nature lyric of two stanzas, despite the fact that its cadence halts in the final couplet, is compact of atmosphere; and to one who has been companioned by the pines, it brings an aromatic breath, full of stimulus:

The sun in the pine is sleeping, sleeping.

The drops of resin gleam. . . .

There's a mighty wizard with perfumes keeping
My brain benumbed in a dream !

The wind in the pine is rushing, rushing,

Fine and unfettered and wild. . . .

There's a mighty mother imperiously hushing
Her fretful, uneasy child !

These lines give over pictures of mornings in the radiant sunlight of the North, that cloudless, lifted air; and "The drops of resin gleam," has the same touch of transmutation that some suggestion of the brine has for the exiled native of the seaboard.

Miss Hall's themes are not sought far afield, but bring, in nearly all the poems, a hint of personal experience; nature, love, spiritual emotion, blending with lighter moods and fancies, comprise the record of the *Age of Fairygold*. We have glanced at the nature

verse; that upon love is subtler in touch, but holds to the intimate note distinguishing all of her work. The second of these stanzas contains a graphic image:

Be good to me ! If all the world united
 Should bend its powers to gird my youth with pain,
 Still might I fly to thee, Dear, and be righted —
 But if thou wrong'st me, where shall I complain ?

I am the dove a random shot surprises,
 That from her flight she droppeth quivering,
 And in the deadly arrow recognizes
 A blood-wet feather — once in her own wing !

In her poem called "The Rival" human nature speaks a direct word, particularly in the contradiction of the last stanza. The lines have the quality of speech rather than of print :

This is the hardest of my fate :
 She 's better whom he doth prefer
 Than I am that he worshipped late,
 As well as so much prettier,
 So much more fortunate !

He 'll not repent ; oh, you will see,
 She 'll never give him cause to grieve !
 I dream that he comes back to me,
 Leaving her, — but he 'll never leave !
 Hopelessly sweet is she.

So that if in my place she stood,
 She 'd spare to curse him, she 'd forgive !

I loathe her, but I know she would —
And so will I, God, as I live,
Not she alone is good!

The ethical inconsistency of the above stanza, "I loathe her," and "Not she alone is good," is so human and racy with suggestion of these paradoxical moods of ours, that the stanza, together with its companion lines, becomes a leaf torn from the book of life.

In its spiritual quality Miss Hall's work shows, perhaps, its finest distinction: brave, strong, acquiescent, inducing in one a nobler mood,—such is the spirit of the volume. Its philosophy is free from didacticism or moralizing; indeed, it should scarcely be called philosophy, but rather the personal record of experiences touching the inner life,—phases of feeling interpreted in their spiritual import. These lines express the mood:

Then lead me, Friend. Here is my hand,
Not in dumb resignation lent
Because Thee one cannot withstand —
In love, Lord, with complete consent.

• • • • •
Lead. If we come to the cliff's crest,
And I hear deep below — O deep! —
The torrent's roar, and "Leap!" Thou say'st,
I will not question — I will leap.

The last stanza, in its vivid illustrative quality, is an admirable expression of spiritual assurance.

Another brief lyric rings with the true note of valor, declaring the eternal potency of hope, and one's obligation to pass on his unspent faith, though falling by the way:

Could I not be the pilgrim
To reach my saint's abode,
I would make myself the road
To lead some other pilgrim
Where my soul's treasure glowed.

Could not I in the eager van
Be the stalwart pioneer
Who points where the way is clear,
I would be the man who sinks in the swamp,
And cries to the rest, "Not here!"

From an Eastern Apologue Miss Hall has drawn a charming illustration of the power of influence and association :

"Thou smell'st not ill, thou object plain,
Thou art a small, pretentious grain
Of amber, I suppose."
"Nay, my good friend, I am by birth
A common clod of scentless earth . . .
But I lived with the Rose."

In the poems of a blither note, Miss Hall excels, having a swift and sprightly fancy and

a clever aptness of phrase, which, in *Allegretto*, her collection of lighter verse, reveals itself in charming witticisms and whimsicalities. Her children's poems are delicate in touch and fancy, and quaintly humorous. Her lines, "To A Weed," in the second collection, tuck away a moral in their sprightly comment; indeed, a bit of philosophy as to being glad in the sun and taking one's due of life, despite limitations, which renders them more than the merry apostrophe they seem:

You bold thing ! thrusting 'neath the very nose
Of her fastidious majesty, the rose,
Even in the best ordainéd garden bed,
Unauthorized, your smiling little head !

The gardener, mind ! will come in his big boots,
And drag you up by your rebellious roots,
And cast you forth to shrivel in the sun,
Your daring quelled, your little weed's life done.

• • • • •
Meantime — ah, yes ! the air is very blue,
And gold the light, and diamond the dew, —
You laugh and courtesy in your worthless way,
And you are gay, ah, so exceeding gay !

You argue, in your manner of a weed,
You did not make yourself grow from a seed ;
You fancy you 've a claim to standing-room,
You dream yourself a right to breathe and bloom.

• • • • •

You know, you weed, I quite agree with you,
I am a weed myself, and I laugh too,—
Both, just as long as we can shun his eye,
Let's sniff at the old gardener trudging by!

In the art of compression, in consistent and restrained imagery, in clearness and simplicity, and in freedom from affectation, Miss Hall's work is altogether commendable. In technique she makes no ambitious flights, employing almost wholly the more direct and simple forms and metres, but these suit the intimate mood and singing note of her themes better than more intricate measures. Technically her chief defect is in the disregard which she frequently shows for the demands of metre. I say disregard, for it is evident from the grace of the majority of her work that she allows herself to depart from metrical canons at her own will, with the occasional result of jagged lines which may have seemed more expressive to Miss Hall than those of a smoother cadence, but which are likely to offend the ear of one sensitive to rhythm. These lapses are not, however, so frequent or conspicuous as to constitute a general indictment against the work.

The reflective predominates over the imaginative in the *Age of Fairygold*, notwithstanding the suggestion of the title. Indeed, there is a

subtly pensive note running through the volume, which remains in one's mind as a characteristic impression when the lighter notes are forgotten. They are not poems of vivid color, imagination, nor passion, though touched with all. They are not incrusted with verbal gems, though the diction is fitting and graceful. They have no daringly inventive metres, though the form is always in harmony with the thought,—in short, the poems of Miss Hall are such as please and satisfy without startling. They are leaves from the book of the heart, and admit us to many a kindred experience. These lines, in which we must take leave of them, carry the wistful, tender, sympathetic note, which distinguishes much of her work :

Though true it be these splendid dreams of mine
Are but as bubbles little children blow,
And that Fate laughs to see them wax and shine,
Then holds out her pale finger — and they go :
One bitter drop falls with a tear-like gleam, —
Still, dreaming is so sweet! Still, let me dream !

Though true, to love may be definéd thus :
To open wide your safe defenceless hall
To some great guest full-armed and dangerous,
With power to ravage, to deface it all,
A cast at dice, whether or no he will, —
Still, loving is so sweet! Let me love still !

XVIII

ARTHUR UPSON

WHEN a volume of verse by Mr. Arthur Upson, entitled *Octaves In An Oxford Garden*, was first brought to my notice by a poet friend with what seemed before reading it a somewhat extravagant comment as to its art, it evoked a certain scepticism as to whether the poet in question would be equally enthusiastic, had he read, marked, learned, and inwardly digested some eighty or more volumes of verse within a given period, thus rendering a more rarely flavored compound necessary to excite anew the poetry-sated appetite; but Mr. Upson's Octaves proved to be a brew into which had fallen this magic drop, and moments had gone the way of oblivion until the charm was drained.

The volume consists of some thirty Octaves written in Wadham Garden at Oxford in the reminiscent month of September; and so do they fix the mood of the place that one marvels at the restfulness, the brooding stillness, the

flavor of time and association which Mr. Upson has managed to infuse into his musing, sabbatical lines. One regrets that the term "atmosphere" has become so cheapened, for in the exigent moment when no other will serve as well, he has the depressing consciousness that virtue has gone from the word he must employ. Despite this fact, it is atmosphere, in its most pervasive sense, that imbues Mr. Upson's Octaves, as the first will attest:

The day was like a Sabbath in a swoon.
Under late summer's blue were fair cloud-things
Poising aslant upon their charméd wings,
Arrested by some backward thought of June.
Softly I trod and with repentant shoon,
Half fearfully in sweet imaginings,
Where lay, as might some golden court of kings,
The old Quadrangle paved with afternoon.

What else than a touch of genius is in those three words, "paved with afternoon," as fixing the tempered light, the drowsy calm, of the place?

The Octaves are written in groups, the poems of each having a slight dependence upon one another, so that to be quoted they require the connecting thought. In many cases also the first or the second quatrain of the Octave is more artistic than its companion lines, as in

the one which follows, where the first four lines hold the creative beauty :

As here among the well-remembering boughs,
Where every leaf is tongue to ancient breath,
Speech of the yesteryears forgathereth,
And all the winds are long-fulfilled vows —
So from of old those ringing names arouse
A whispering in the foliate shades of death,
Where History her golden rosary saith,
Glowing, the light of Memory on her brows.

This Octave illustrates also what may be made as a general statement regarding its companions in the volume, that while the glamour may not rest equally upon the poems, they do not lack charm and distinction even in their less creative touches; and there are few in which there does not lurk some surprise in the way of picturesque phrasing.

In the ordering of his cadences Mr. Upson shows a musician's sense of rhythm; note, for example, how the transposition in the following lines enhances their melody and conveys in the initial one the sense of a river flowing:

It was the lip of murmuring Thames along
When new lights sought the wood all strangely fair,
Such quiet lights as saints transfigured wear
In minster windows crept the glades among.

And far as from some hazy hill, yet strong,
Methought an upland shepherd piped it there,
Waking a silvern echo from her lair :
“Sweet Thames, run softly till I end my song !”

Mr. Upson not only obeys by artist instinct the laws of counterpoint, but employs the word with the music in it, and his effects are achieved by the innate harmony of his diction and the poetry in the theme he is shaping. Take as an illustration of this his Octave upon the “Roman Glassware Preserved in the Ashmolean.” Doubtless those fragments of crystal, sheathed, by centuries in the earth, in a translucent film through which shine tints of mother-of-pearl, have met the eyes of many of us, but it needed a poet to deduce from them this illustration :

Fair crystal cups are dug from earth's old crust,
Shattered but lovely, for, at price of all
Their shameful exile from the banquet-hall,
They have been bargaining beauties from the dust.
So, dig my life but deep enough, you must
Find broken friendships round its inner wall —
Which once my careless hand let slip and fall —
Brave with faint memories, rich in rainbow-rust !

One notes in Mr. Upson's work a restraint that is the apogee of good taste. He conveys the mood, whether of love or other emotion,

and makes his feeling another's, but the veil of the temple is never wholly rent; one may but divine the ministries and sacrifices of its altar. He is an idealist, not yet come to the place of disillusion; though wandering at times near to the border of that chilly realm, he wraps his seamless robe of dreams more closely about him and turns back. Mr. Upson is not, however, an unthinking singer to whom all is cheer because he has not the insight to enter into those phases of life that have not yet touched him; on the contrary, his note is not a blithe one, it is meditative, inclining to the philosophical, and tinctured with a certain pensiveness.

Now and again the cosmos thrusts forward a suggestion which becomes the motive of one of the Octaves, as when the garden breeze loosens from the chink a

. . . measure of earth
To match my body's dust when its rebirth
To sod restores old functions I forsook, —

which, in turn, induces a reflection upon the microcosm :

Strange that a sod for just a thrill or two
Should ever be seduced into the round
Of change in which its present state is found
In this my form ! forsake its quiet, true

And fruitfullest retirement, to go through
The heat, the strain, the languor and the wound !
Forget soft rain to hear the stormier sound,—
Exchange for burning tears its peaceful dew !

Again one has the applied illustration both of the pains and requitals that cling about the sod in its "strange estate of flesh," in these lines declaring that

Some dust of Eden eddies round us yet.
Some clay o' the Garden, clinging in the breast,
Down near the heart yet bides unmanifest.
Last eve in gardens strange to me I let
The path lead far ; and lo, my vision met
Old forfeit hopes. I, as on homeward quest,
By recognizing trees was bidden rest,
And pitying leaves looked down and sighed, "Forget!"

Mr. Upson has one of his characteristic touches in the words "old forfeit hopes," pictured as starting suddenly before one in the new path that has beguiled him. In looking over the Octaves, which embrace a variety of themes, one doubts if his selections have adequately represented the finely textured lines, pure and individual diction, and the ripe and mellow flavor of it all.

Mr. Upson's work has had its meed of recognition abroad: his first volume, *Westwind Songs*, contained a warmly appreciative introduction by

"Carmen Sylva," the poet-queen of Roumania, and his drama, *The City*, just issued in Edinburgh, is introduced by Count Lützow of the University of Prague, a well-known scholar and authority upon Bohemian literature. Taking a backward glance at the first volume before looking at *The City*, one finds few of the ear-marks of a first collection of poetry, which it must become the subsequent effort of the writer to live down.

The lines "When We Said Good-Bye" are among the truest in feeling, though almost too intimate to quote; and this sympathetic lyric, entitled "Old Gardens," has a delicate grace:

The white rose tree that spent its musk
For lovers' sweeter praise,
The stately walks we sought at dusk,
Have missed thee many days.

Again, with once-familiar feet,
I tread the old parterre —
But, ah, its bloom is now less sweet
Than when thy face was there.

I hear the birds of evening call ;
I take the wild perfume ;
I pluck a rose — to let it fall
And perish in the gloom.

Westwind Songs, however, waft other thoughts than those of love. There is a heavier freight in this "Thought of Stevenson":

High and alone I stood on Calton Hill
Above the scene that was so dear to him
Whose exile dreams of it made exile dim.
October wooed the folded valleys till
In mist they blurred, even as our eyes upfill
Under a too sweet memory; spires did swim,
And gables rust-red, on the gray sea's brim —
But on these heights the air was soft and still.
Yet not all still: an alien breeze did turn
Here as from bournes in aromatic seas,
As round old shrines a new-freed soul might yearn
With incense to his earthly memories.
And then this thought: Mist, exile, searching pain,
But the brave soul is free, is home again!

How fine is the imaginative thought of October wooing the valleys till they blurred with mist, as one's "eyes upfill under a too sweet memory," and still finer the touch of the "alien breeze" turning

Here as from bournes in aromatic seas.

So one might imagine the journeying winds blowing hither from Vaea, and the intensely human soul of Stevenson yearning to the vital sympathies of earth.

Mr. Upson has recently published in Edin-

burgh and America a poem-drama entitled *The City*, and containing, as previously mentioned, a scholarly introduction by Count Lützow of the Bohemian University of Prague, who points out the historical and traditional sources of the story.

The drama is embraced in one act, and covers a period of but one day, from dawn to dusk; nevertheless, it is not wanting in incident, since its operative causes reach their culmination in this period. The "conditions precedent" of the plot, briefly summarized, show that Abgar, King of Edessa, has married Cleonis, an Athenian, whose foster-sister, Stilbe, having been an earlier favorite of the king, is actuated by jealousy of the pair, and although dwelling as an inmate of the royal household, plots with her lover, Belarion, against the government of the king, ill at his palace outside the city and awaiting the arrival of Jesus to heal him of his disease.

The subjects of Abgar have rebelled not only at his protracted absence from the city, in dalliance, as they deem it, with the Athenian queen, but because of measures of reform instituted by him which had done despite to their ancient idolatries and desecrated certain shrines in the public improvements of the city.

Not only had the king progressed beyond his day in the material advancement of his realm, but his eager, swiftly conceiving mind had imaged a spiritual ideal even more vital; and at the opening of the drama he awaits the coming of the Nazarene to heal him, that he may devote himself to the development of his people.

The scene opens at the dawn in the portico of the palace, where the queen's women, attired in white pepli, have spent the night singing soft music to the accompaniment of the lyre to charm the fevered sleep of the king. They are dismissed by Agamede, cousin of the queen, who detains Stilbe to learn the cause of her discontent. Sufficient is revealed to indicate that Belarion, the betrothed of Stilbe, whom the oracle has declared a man of promise, is plotting against the life of the king, aided in this design by Stilbe, who has been summoned almost from the marriage altar to attend the queen.

The second scene takes place four hours later, in the palace garden, and pictures the return of the messenger and his attendants sent to conduct Jesus to Edessa. The opening dialogue occurs between Ananias, the returned messenger, and the old and learned doctor of the court, who details with elaborate minuteness the ministries of his skill since the

departure of the former to Jerusalem. While this dialogue is characteristic, well phrased, and indirectly humorous, it is a dramatic mistake to introduce it at such length, retarding the action, which should be focused sharply upon the essential motive of the scene,—the conveying to the queen the message of the Nazarene and the incidents of his refusal. The literary quality of the dialogue between the queen and Ananias has much beauty, being memorable for the picture it conveys of Jesus among his disciples at Bethany, "a hamlet up an olive-sprinkled hill," where, guided by Philip, the Galilean, the messenger found him. The description of the personality and manner of Christ is a subtle piece of portraiture. To the question of Cleonis,—

Tell me of his appearance. What said he?

Ananias replies :

He had prepared this scroll and gave it me
With courteous words, yet, as I after thought,
Most singularly free from deference
For one who ranks with artisans. His look
Betrayed no satisfaction with our suit ;
Yet did he emanate a grave respect
Which seemed habitual, much as Stoics use,
Yet kinder ; and his bearing had more grace
Than any Jew's I ever saw before.

As for his words, I own I scarce recall them,
And have been wondering ever since that I,
Bred at a Court and tutored to brave deeds,
Should be so sudden silenced. For I stood
Obedient to unknown authorities
Which spake in eye and tone and every move,
In that his first mild answer of refusal.

Ere the departure of the king's embassy from Jerusalem, the tragic drama of the crucifixion had been enacted and in part witnessed by them, which Ananias also describes with graphic force; in it appears an adaptation of the Veronica story. The lines well convey the picture :

As the way widened past the high-walled house
Of Berenis, the throng thinned, and I saw
Plainer the moving figure of the man
And the huge beam laid on him. Suddenly
From the great gate I saw a form dart forth
Straight towards him, pause, and seem to have some speech
With the condemned, as, by old privilege,
Sometimes the pious ladies do with those
Who tread the shameful road. Her speech was brief.
She turned, and, as I saw 't was Berenis,
Towards me she came, and her eyes, wet with tears,
Smiled sadly, and she said these final words :

“Such shame a mighty purpose led him to,
Yet he shrinks not, but steadfast to this end
Inevitable hath he come his way.
A woman of my house was healed of him
By kissing once the border of his garment.

Take your King this, and say that as he dragged
His cruel but chosen cross to his own doom
Some comfort in its cooling web he found,
And left a blessing in its pungent folds."

In the third scene of the drama, occurring in the afternoon, Abgar is informed of the Healer's refusal to accede to his request, but in the presence of the queen and the attendants assembled in the royal garden, the letter of the Nazarene, promising healing and peace, is read to him by the returned envoy, and at length the linen, received from the hand of Berenis, and upon whose folds the healing power of Christ had been invoked, is given into the keeping of Abgar, through whose veins, as by the visible touch of the divine hand, the current of new life throbs and courses. The moment is fraught with intense reality, which Mr. Upson has kept as much as possible to such effects as transcend words. Just previous to the vital transformation Abgar has said :

I have not yet resolved the Healer's words
Into clear meaning ; but their crystal soon
In the still cup of contemplation may
Give up its precious drug to heal our cares, —

but the supreme end was not wrought by contemplation, nor could its processes be resolved

by analysis, or other words be found to proclaim it than the simple but thrilling exclamation:

I feel it now! All through these withered veins
I feel it bound and glow! O life, life, life!

From this period the incidents of the drama develop with all the tensity of action which previous to this scene it has lacked, giving to the close a certain sense of crowding when compared with the slow movement of the previous scenes consisting chiefly of recital, well told, but with little to enact, making the work to this point rather a graphically related story than a drama. The incidents which come on apace in the latter part of the play have, to be sure, been foreshadowed in the earlier part, but one is scarcely prepared for the swift succession of events, nor for their bloody character after the sabbatical mood into which the earlier scenes of the work have thrown him. If the drama covered a longer period, giving time between scenes for the development of events, even though such development were but suggested by a statement of dates, the impression of undue haste in the climax would be obviated; but in the interval of one day, even though all events leading to the issue have been working silently for months or years, their culmination seems to come without due preparation to the

reader's mind, and one is swept off his feet by consummations with whose causes he had scarcely reckoned.

Immediately following the healing of Abgar, the queen's cousin, Agamede, enters breathless and announces to the king the plot on foot to overthrow him, which inspires the king with a resolve to set forth at once to the city. Upon the attempt of the queen to deter him, Abgar relates a prophetic dream of his city and its destiny through him, which is one of the finest conceptions, both in spiritual import and elevation of phrase, contained in the drama. The dream is related as having appeared to the king in three distinct visions, glimpsing his city in its past, present, and future. It is too long to follow in detail, but this glimpse is from the vision of the past, where

Through that wreck of fortress, mart and fane
And fallen mausoleum crowded o'er
With characters forevermore unread,
Only the wind's soft hands went up and down
Scattering the obliterative sands.
I, led in trance by shapes invisible,
Approached a temple's splendid architrave
Half sunk in sod betwixt its columns' bases,
And there by sudden divination read
The deep-cut legend of that awful gate :

APPEASE WITH SACRIFICE THE UNKNOWN POWERS.

The next vision is of the city in its present state, "builded on like dust," but teeming with activity and material purpose, through which a glimmering ideal begins to dawn :

They toiled, or played, or fought, or sued the gods,
Absorbed each in his own peculiar lust,
As if there were no morrow watching them ;
Yet each was happier in the morrow-dream
Than ever in all achievéd yesterdays.

Then is revealed to the mind of Abgar the high commission intrusted to him :

And as I looked, I saw a man who long
In upward meditation on his roof
Sat all alone, communing with his soul,
And he arose, and presently went down,
Down in the long black streets among his kind,
And there with patience taught them steadfastly ;
But, for the restless souls he made in them,
They turned and slew him and went on their ways,
And a great fog crept up and covered all.

Here surely is keen spiritual psychology, that "for the restless souls he made in them" they slew him. All martyrdoms are traced to their source in this line, which holds also the suggestive truth as to the final acceptance of that for which the prophet dies. Once having planted the seed whose stirring makes the "restless soul," its growth is committed to the

Law, and can no more be prevented than the shining of the sun or the flowing of the tides. Abgar was granted a third vision, of the city in its embodied ideal; its ultimate beauty and achievement were given definite shape before him, and the recital ends with the triumphal note:

Fear not for me : I go unto the city !

The last scene is enacted an hour later in the garden lighted only by the moon, and opens with the lyric sung by Agamede to the blossoming oleander-tree 'neath which her child lies buried. These are lines of a pathos as delicate and spiritual as the moonlight, the fragrance, the memory inspiring them :

Grow, grow, thou little tree,
His body at the roots of thee ;
Since last year's loveliness in death
The living beauty nourisheth.

Bloom, bloom, thou little tree,
Thy roots around the heart of me ;
Thou canst not blow too white and fair
From all the sweetness hidden there.

Die, die, thou little tree,
And be as all sweet things must be ;
Deep where thy petals drift I, too,
Would rest the changing seasons through.

Then follows a dialogue of warmly emotional feeling between the king and queen, in the interval of waiting for the chariot and attendants to be brought to the gate. All the physical side of the healing of Abgar has now been resolved into its spiritual meaning, and he reinterprets the words of the Nazarene's message that of his infirmity he shall know full cure and those most dear to him have peace; but while Abgar speaks of his changed ideal, looking now to a "city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God," a clamor is heard at the gate, and the body-slave rushes to the king with the tidings that armed troops approach the palace, and begs him to flee in the waiting chariot. Spurning thought of escape, the king and queen mount the dais and stand calmly watching in the moonlight the heroic spectacle of the approaching army. At this moment the queen's women rush into the garden, demanding flight; the conflict begins along the wall; the gate bursts open, and Ananias retreats to the garden, wounded, and shortly dies. A brief interval of quiet, but full of portent, succeeds, when Stilbe, who had plotted with the king's enemies, rushes through the gate, pursued by the soldiers and bleeding from wounds of their sabres. She is shot, ap-

parently by the hand of her former lover, Belarion, and falls dead at the king's feet. Here Mr. Upson leaves an unravelled thread of his plot, or at least one for whose clew I have sought vainly. No cause has been shown for violence toward her on the part of the soldiers whom she aids, nor on that of her supposed lover and betrothed, Belarion. Why, then, she should become his victim, or why he should look upon her dead body and exclaim :

“ Thus Fate helps out ! ”

is at least a riddle past my solving. If, as the results indicate, Belarion has been using Stilbe as a tool to aid his ambitions, it should scarcely have been related in good faith in the beginning of the drama that their marriage was to be celebrated the week in which the action of the play falls. If logical reasons exist for this change of front, Mr. Upson should have indicated them more clearly.

The climax of the play follows immediately upon the death of Stilbe, when the king, called to account by the insolent Belarion, in righteous indignation strikes him down. It may be questioned whether such a deed could follow so quickly upon the rapt spiritual state to which the king had been lifted; but one inclines to

rejoice that the natural man, impelled by who shall say what higher force, triumphed, ere the queen, pointing to the dead body of the trusted messenger, Ananias, and repeating the Nazarene's words, "Those most dear to you have peace,"—demanded of the king his blade.

As they stand defenceless but assured, the soldiers, awed by the might of some inner force in the king, shrink back, and the drama closes with the victorious words,—

Together, Love, we go unto the city !

Though the play, looked upon from a dramatic standpoint, lacks in the earlier scenes a certain magnetism of touch and vividness of action, and in the last scene is somewhat overcharged with them, it has many finely conceived situations which strike the golden mean, and the characterization throughout is strongly defined. Its literary quality must, however, take precedence of its dramatic in the truer appraisal. In diction it shows none of the strained effort toward the supposed speech of an earlier time, which usually distinguishes poetic dramas laid far in the past, but has throughout a fitting dignity and harmony, combined with ease and flexibility of phrase and frequent eloquence of

dialogue, especially in the passages spoken by Abgar.

It is a play rather of character and high motive than of plot, a piece of sheer idealism, notable alike for its spiritual and its poetic quality.

BIOGRAPHICAL INDEX

- BROWN, Alice.** Born Hampton Falls, N. H., Dec. 5, 1857. Graduated Robinson Seminary, Exeter, N. H., 1876. On staff of *Youth's Companion*. Author: *Fools of Nature*; *Meadow-Grass*; *By Oak and Thorn* (English travels); *Life of Mercy Otis Warren*; *The Road to Castaly* (poems); *The Days of his Youth*; *Robert Louis Stevenson, A Study* (with Louise I. Guiney); *Tiverton Tales*; *King's End*; *Margaret Warrener*; *The Mannerings*; *Judgment*. Resides in Boston.
- BURTON, Richard.** Born Hartford, Conn., March 14, 1859. Graduated Trinity College, Hartford. Ph.D. Johns Hopkins, 1887. Married Oct. 7, 1889. Taught Old English Johns Hopkins, 1888. Managing Editor N. Y. Churchman, 1888-89. Travelled in Europe, 1889-90. Literary Editor *Hartford Courant*, 1890-97. Associate Editor Warner Library World's Best Literature, 1897-99. Professor English Literature, University of Minnesota, 1898-1902. Editor Lothrop Publishing Co., 1902-04. Lectures upon literature and the drama. Author: (verse) *Dumb in June*, 1895; *Memorial Day*, 1897; *Lyrics of Brotherhood*, 1899; *Message and Melody*, 1903; (prose) *Literary Likings*, essays, 1898; *Life of Whittier*, in *Beacon Biography Series*, 1900; *Forces in Fiction*, essays, 1902. Resides in Boston.
- CARMAN, Bliss.** Born Fredericton, N. B., April 15, 1861. Graduate University of New Brunswick, 1881. Post-graduate student University of Edinburgh, 1882-83, and of Harvard, 1886-88. Studied law, practised civil engineering, taught school. Office Editor N. Y. *Independent*, 1890-1902. For past four years has contributed a weekly column, called "Marginal Notes," to the *Evening Post*,

Chicago, The Transcript, Boston, and the Commercial Advertiser, N. Y. Unmarried. Author: Low Tide on Grand Pré, 1893; A Sea-Mark, 1895; Behind the Arras, 1895; Ballads of Lost Haven, 1897; By the Aurelian Wall, 1897; Songs from Vagabondia, in collaboration with Richard Hovey, 1894; More Songs from Vagabondia, 1896; Last Songs from Vagabondia, 1900; St. Kavin, a Ballad, 1894; At Michaelmas, 1895; The Girl in the Poster, 1897; The Green Book of the Bards, 1898; Vengeance of Noel Bassard, 1899; Ode on the Coronation of King Edward, 1902; From the Book of Myths, 1902; Pipes of Pan No. 1, 1902; Pipes of Pan No. 2, 1903; The Word at St. Kavins, 1903; Sappho: One Hundred Lyrics, 1903. Resides in New York.

CAWEIN, Madison Julius. Born Louisville, Ky., March 23, 1865. Graduated at High School in Louisville, 1886. Since then has confined himself to the writing of verse. Author: Blooms of the Berry, 1887; The Triumph of Music, 1888; Accolon of Gaul, 1889; Lyrics and Idylls, 1890; Days and Dreams, 1891; Moods and Memories, 1892; Red Leaves and Roses, 1893; Poems of Nature and Love, 1893; Intimations of the Beautiful, 1894; The White Snake (translations from German poets), 1895; Undertones, 1896; The Garden of Dreams, 1896; Shapes and Shadows, 1898; Idyllic Monologues, 1898; Myth and Romance, 1899; Weeds by the Wall, 1901; One Day and Another, 1901; Kentucky Poems (selections published in London with an Introduction by Edmund Gosse), 1902; A Voice on the Wind, 1902. Resides Louisville, Ky.

FENOLLOSA, Mary McNeil. Born in Alabama. Graduated Irving Academy, Mobile. Married, 1895, Ernest F. Fenollosa. Resided in Japan about eight years. Author: Out of the Nest: A Flight of Verses, 1899; and Child Verses on Japanese Subjects. Wrote Monograph upon Heroshige, the Artist of Mist, Snow, and Rain; also verses, sketches, and stories in many magazines.

GUINEY, Louise Imogen. Born Boston, Jan. 7, 1861. Graduated Elmhurst Academy, Providence, R. I., 1879. Studied afterwards under private tutors and abroad. Contributor

since 1885 to Harper's, Atlantic, and other magazines. Author: *The White Sail and Other Poems*, 1887; *Monsieur Henri: A Footnote to French History*, 1892; *A Roadside Harp*, 1893; *A Little English Gallery*, 1894; *Patrins*, essays, 1897; *England and Yesterday*, 1898; *A Martyr's Idyl*, and *Shorter Poems*, 1899; Editor *James Clarence Mangan, His Selected Poems*, with Study by the Editor, 1897; of the *Matthew Arnold* (in small Riverside Literature Series); of Dr. T. W. Parsons' Translation of *Divina Commedia* of Dante, 1893; of *Henry Vaughn's Mount of Olives*, 1902. Resides since 1901 in Oxford, England.

HALL, Gertrude. Born Boston, Sept. 8, 1863. Educated private schools in Florence, Italy. Author: (verse) *Far from To-day*; *Allegretto* (light verse): *Foam of the Sea*; *Age of Fairygold*; Translator *Paul Verlaine's Poems*, and of *Cyrano de Bergerac*; (prose) *The Hundred, and Other Stories*; *April's Sowing*; *The Legend of Sainte Cariberte des Ois*. Resides New York City.

HOVEY, Richard. Born Normal, Ill., 1864. Educated Dartmouth College. Author: Poems, privately printed, 1880; *Songs from Vagabondia*; *More Songs from Vagabondia*; and *Last Songs from Vagabondia* (in collaboration with Bliss Carman); *Seaward: An Elegy* (on the death of Thomas William Parsons); *The Quest of Merlin: A Masque*; *The Marriage of Guenevere: A Tragedy*; *The Birth of Galahad: A Romantic Drama*; *Taliesin: A Masque*; *Along the Trail: A Book of Lyrics*; Translator the Plays of Maeterlinck (in two series). Died 1900.

KNOWLES, Frederic Lawrence. Born Lawrence, Mass., Sept. 8, 1869. Graduated Wesleyan University, 1894. Harvard, 1896. In editorial department Houghton, Mifflin and Co., from February to September of 1898. Literary adviser of L. C. Page and Co., 1899-1900. Since that time adviser for Dana Estes and Company. Unmarried. Author: (prose) *Practical Hints for Young Writers, Readers, and Book Buyers*, 1897; *A Kipling Primer*, 1900. (Repub- lished in England); (verse) *On Life's Stairway*, 1900; *Love Triumphant*, 1904. Edited *Cap and Gown Second Series*,

1897; *Golden Treasury of American Lyrics*, 1897; *Treasury Humorous Poetry*, 1902; *The Famous Children of Literature Series*, 1902. Resides in Boston.

PEABODY, Josephine Preston. Born in New York. Educated Girls' Latin School, Boston, and at Radcliffe College, 1894-96. Instructor in English Literature at Wellesley College, 1901-03. Author: *Old Greek Folk-Stories* (Riverside Lit. Series) 1899; *The Wayfarers*, a book of verse, 1898; *Fortune and Men's Eyes*; *New Poems with a Play*, 1900; *Marlowe, A Drama*, 1901; *The Singing Leaves*, 1903. Contributor to leading magazines. Resides Cambridge, Mass.

REESE, Lizette Woodworth. Born in Baltimore Co., Md., Jan. 9, 1856. Teacher of English, West High School, Baltimore. Author: *A Branch of May*; *A Handful of Lavender*, 1891; *A Quiet Road*, 1896. Resides in Baltimore.

ROBERTS, Charles George Douglas. Born Douglas, N. B., Jan. 10, 1860. Graduated University of New Brunswick, 1879 (A. M. 1880). Married 1880. Head Master Chatham Grammar School, 1879-81; York St. School, Fredericton, 1881-83. Editor *Week*, Toronto, 1883-84. Professor English and French Literature, King's College, Windsor, N. S., 1885-88. Professor English and Economics, same, 1888-95. Associate Editor *Illustrated American*, 1897-98. Author: (verse) *Orion and Other Poems*, 1880; *In Divers Tones*, 1887; *Ave: An Ode for the Shelley Centenary*, 1892; *Songs of the Common Day, and Ave*, 1893; *The Book of the Native*, 1896; *New York Nocturnes*, 1898; *Poems*, 1901; *The Book of the Rose*, 1903; (prose) *The Canadians of Old*; *Earth's Enigmas*; *The Raid from Beausejour*; *A History of Canada*; *The Forge in the Forest*; *Around the Camp-fire*; *Reube Dare's Shad Boat*; *A Sister to Evangeline*; *Appleton's Canadian Guide-Book*, 1899; *By the Marshes of Minas*, 1900; *The Heart of the Ancient Wood*, 1900; *The Kindred of the Wild*, 1902; *Barbara Ladd*, 1902; *The Bird Book*, 1903; *The Watchers of the Trails*, 1904. Editor the *Alastor* and *Adonais* of *Shelley* with Introduction and Notes, 1902. Resides New York City.

SANTAYANA, George E. Born in Spain, 1863. Assistant Professor of Philosophy, Harvard University. Author: (verse) *Sonnets and Other Poems*, 1894; *Lucifer: A Theological Tragedy*, 1899; *The Hermit of Carmel and Other Poems*, 1901; (prose) *The Sense of Beauty*, 1896; *Interpretations of Poetry and Religion*, 1900. Resides Cambridge, Mass.

SCOLLARD, Clinton. Born Clinton, N. Y., Sept. 18, 1860. Graduated from Hamilton College, 1881. Also studied at Harvard and at Cambridge, England. Professor of English Literature at Hamilton College, 1888-96. Author: (verse) *Pictures in Song*, 1884; *With Reed and Lyre*, 1888; *Old and New World Lyrics*, 1888; *Giovio and Giulia*, 1891; *Songs of Sunrise Lands*, 1892; *The Hills of Song*, 1895; *A Boy's Book of Rhyme*, 1896; *Skenandoa*, 1896; *The Lutes of Morn*, 1901; *Lyrics of the Dawn*, 1902; *The Lyric Bough*, 1904; *Ballads of Valor and Victory*, 1904 (in collaboration with Wallace Rice); *Footfarings* (prose and verse) 1904; (prose) *Under Summer Skies*, 1892; *On Sunny Shores*, 1893; *A Man-at-Arms*, 1898; *The Son of a Tory*, 1900; *A Knight of the Highway*; *The Cloistering of Ursula*, 1902; *Lawton*, 1900; Editor *Ford's Broken Hearts*, 1904, and of *Ballads of American Bravery*, 1900. Resides Clinton, N. Y.

THOMAS, Edith Matilda. Born Chatham, O., August 12, 1854. Educated Normal School, Geneva, Ohio. Removed to New York, 1888. Author: (verse) *A New Year's Masque and Other Poems*, 1885; *Lyrics and Sonnets*, 1887; *Babes of the Year*, 1888; *The Inverted Torch*, 1890; *Fair Shadow Land*, 1893; *A Winter Swallow*, 1896; *The Dancers*, 1903; (prose) *The Round Year*. Resides West New Brighton, Staten Island.

TORRENCE, Frederic Ridgely. Born Xenia, O., Nov. 27, 1875. Educated under private tutors and at Miami University, O., also Princeton. Librarian Astor Library, 1897-1901. Librarian Lenox Library, 1901-03. At present Associate Editor of *The Critic*, New York. Unmarried. Author: (verse) *The House of a Hundred Lights*, 1900; *El Dorado, A Tragedy*, 1903. Resides in New York.

Biographical Index

UPSON, Arthur. Born in Camden, N. Y., 1877. Graduated from Camden Academy, 1894. B. A. University of Minnesota. Author: Poems (with George Norton Northrop); Westwind Songs (with an Introduction by "Carmen Sylva"); Octaves In An Oxford Garden; The City, a Poem-Drama (with Introduction by Count Lützow). Resides Minneapolis, Minn.

WOODBERRY, George E. Born Beverly, Mass., May 12, 1855. Graduated Harvard, 1877. Professor of English at University of Nebraska, 1877-78, and 1880-82. On editorial staff of the Nation, 1878-79. Author: History of Wood Engraving, 1883; Life of Edgar Allan Poe, 1885; Studies in Letters and Life, 1890; The North Shore Watch and Other Poems, 1890; Heart of Man, 1899; Wild Eden, 1899; Makers of Literature, 1900; Nathaniel Hawthorne, 1902; Poems (collected edition), 1903. Editor Complete Poems of Shelley; Complete Works of Poe (with Mr. Stedman); National Studies in American Letters; Columbia Studies in Comparative Literature; Lamb's Essays of Elia; Aubrey de Vere's Selected Poems, and Bacon's Essays. Editor of the Journal of Comparative Literature. From 1891 to 1903 Professor of Comparative Literature at Columbia University.

